

# *The* HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN

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A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF HIGH SCHOOL DRAMATICS



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FOR HIGH SCHOOLS

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# BROADWAY AT A GLANCE

by  
Margaret  
Wentworth

**B**Y the time the THESPIAN reaches you, New York will have two *Hamlets* in the field. It is seldom that one gets a chance to compare two first-class productions with all their differences; ranging from the way the script is cut and re-arranged to all the changes, obvious or subtle, due to the personalities of the leading characters and directors.

John Gielgud is thirty-two and has declared that he will not play *Hamlet* after he is thirty-five. He is equipped with a supple body, an expressive face and a rich and musical voice. He gives to an astonishing degree that "illusion of the first time," so precious in the theatre, so hard to obtain in a classic. Lillian Gish is an ethereal Ophelia. Arthur Byron a dignified Polonius and Judith Anderson a truly regal Queen. Mielziner has provided beautiful sets and gay costumes against which Hamlet's "customary suit of solemn black" stands out like a spruce in autumn-tinted woods.

Leslie Howard's *Hamlet* has been received with great enthusiasm in Boston. With him are Pamela Stanley as Ophelia, Mary Servoss as Queen, and Aubrey Mather as Polonius. Sets and costumes are the work of Stewart Chaney who did *The Old Maid* and *Parnell*.

The two outstanding hits of the new season are *Tovarich* and *Stage Door*.

## Stage Door

The latter is the work of that clever team, Edna Ferber and George Kaufman, and deals, surprisingly enough, with the corrupting influence of Hollywood. They should know, they spend much of their time there and also spend its tainted money! The play passes in New York, in a boarding-house for stage aspirants, and abounds in sketches of the girls and the life they lead there, which are sharply and truly observed. Margaret Sullivan gives the lie to the theme of the play by coming back from a maligned Hollywood with a perfected technique which makes her performance a delight to watch.

## Tovarich

*Tovarich* has been a great success in Paris and London, and has a fine cast—Marta Abba, John Halliday, Ernest Lawford, and Jay Fasset. The plot is the old one of impoverished aristocrats—in this case Mme. Abba and Mr. Halliday as White Russians—driven to taking servants' positions in a family inferior to themselves in birth and breeding. But it is not their birth which endears the Prince and Grand Duchess to us; it is their gayety, gallantry, and generosity. With an impossible scene in which the Old Russia gives aid and comfort to the New, the

play would be effective even if poorly done; as it is, the evening ends all too soon.

## St. Helena

*St. Helena* is a quiet, episodic play which becomes absorbing because of Maurice Evans' impersonation of Napoleon. Written by Sherriff of *Journey's End* fame, and by Jeanne de Casalis, the play brings home to us those tragic years when France's eagle was chained on a Mediterranean rock.

## Reflected Glory

Tallulah Bankhead is playing *Reflected Glory*, a play of George Kelly's not up to his usual high mark. Miss Bankhead's part, however—that of an actress toying with the idea of giving up the stage for domesticity—fits her personality like a glove.

## Night Must Fall

*Night Must Fall* fits its hero as why should it not? since Emlyn Williams wrote it for himself. It is a study of murder's psychology which might well be called a "flower of evil." Its deadly fascination overcomes the girl in the play like a moral miasma and at the conclusion of the play she has become a silent accomplice.

## Seen But Not Heard

*Seen But Not Heard* is a more mediocre murder mystery, enlivened by the performances of three gifted children; Frankie Thomas, Jr., of *Wednesday's Child*; Anne Baxter who is making her debut at thirteen; and a veteran of ten years, Raymond Roe who was in *The Great Waltz*.

The Guild play, *And Stars Remain*, is bloodless and talky but well cast and acted.

*Swing Your Lady*, is a farce about a lady blacksmith and a Greek wrestler in the Ozark Mountains. It is an elongated incident but boisterously funny part of the time.

## Present Broadway Successes:

*Boy Meets Girl*.....by Bella and Samuel Spewack  
*Dead End*.....Sidney Kingsley  
*Hamlet*.....William Shakespeare  
*Idiot's Delight*.....R. E. Sherwood  
*Night Must Fall*.....Emlyn Williams  
*Three Men on a Horse*.....Holm and Abbott  
*Tovarich*.....Jacques Deval  
*Victoria Regina*.....Laurence Housman  
*Pre-Honeymoon*.....Nichols and Ronkel  
*St. Helena*.....Sherriff and de Casalis  
*Stage Door*.....Kaufman and Ferber

## MUSICALS:

*Gilbert and Sullivan, New Faces of 1936*,  
*Red, Hot and Blue*, *White Horse Inn*,  
and *Ziegfeld Follies*.

## Plumes in the Dust

*Plumes in the Dust* finds Henry Hull, so recently the unkempt Jeeter of one of the *Tobacco Roads*, playing one of our most tragic geniuses, Edgar Allen Poe. Few of these biographical plays are able to compete in interest with plays dealing with our present-day problems and Poe's strange, pathetic child-wife does not provide a strong, normal love interest.

## Come and Gone

Many plays have already come and gone. Of these the most to be regretted is the stately *Daughters of Atreus*, a play in blank verse by Robert Turney which was beautifully produced by Delos Chappell. It has been printed and should be widely read. Mr. Turney blended three Greek tragedies, emphasizing the woman's point of view in each. His first act ended with the sacrifice of Iphigenia; his second with the slaying of Agamemnon; and his third with Orestes' killing Egisthus and his mother.

Also regretted is Sidney Kingsley's *Ten Million Ghosts*, a play about munitions workers. Not so good a play as either *Men in White* or *Dead End*, it nevertheless showed Mr. Kingsley as a playwright with a strong sense of social obligation.

## It Can't Happen Here

And speaking of social obligations *It Can't Happen Here* is probably happening somewhere near you since the PWA is giving the play in some twenty-one cities. It necessarily foreshortens Sinclair Lewis' graphic depiction of the perils of Fascisms but is effective and is certainly needed now.

## Uncle Tom's Cabin

*Uncle Tom's Cabin* has probably been played more times in the United States than any other play. There must have been close to half a century when it was always being played somewhere, somehow or other. But nowadays it is flogging a dead horse. Chattel slavery is gone and the old melodrama ranks with *The Drunkard*, *Murder in the Old Red Barn*, and *East Lynne*. George Abbot spent time, money and loving care in producing a musical version of it called *Sweet River* which lasted but five performances.

The greatest plays of the world are timeless, ageless. But the majority fall far short of being masterpieces; and when we go to these, we like something that deals with our own problems, that speaks our own language. Since plenty of these are written and are constantly seeking production, why should an astute producer take something off the shelf of canned goods? It's a mystery.





## EDITORIAL—WE SAY



*OUR AIM: "To create a Spirit of Active and Intelligent Interest in Dramatics Among Boys and Girls of our Secondary Schools."*

### Advertise Your Play

Effective publicity should be a part of every worth while school project. This is especially true with the work of the dramatics department. The alert drama coach soon learns that the success of her play rests to a great extent upon the manner in which she advertises her production. She also soon discovers that her publicity campaign must begin within her school; that every pupil is a highly important factor in publicizing her production among the people of her community. And she realizes that it is neither expensive nor difficult to secure effective publicity.

As a suggestion of what we mean by effective publicity, we offer the following account of an advertising campaign staged by an average size school in Iowa. The campaign began with a poster contest among the students of the dramatic club. Prizes were awarded for the best posters and the latter were then placed in strategic places in the school building and in the community. At the same time large banners were placed on several buildings; one of them across Main Street. While the play was in rehearsal, a series of articles, all planned to advertise different phases of the production, appeared in the local papers. Being aware of the interest the local townspeople had in those who had parts in the play, the director and her publicity committee kept this interest alive by furnishing the press with appropriate news stories. As the time of performance approached, pictures of the leading players also appeared in the local papers.

At the same time an equally effective campaign was staged within the high school. By means of balloons, paper hats, auto stickers, etc., every pupil was made to realize that the success of the school play, like all other school projects, depended upon his support. About a week before the date of the performance, a ticket selling contest was organized among all the home-rooms. By means of a series of short, forceful talks, members of the dramatics department made the ticket selling contest a matter of vital interest to every group. Prizes were offered to the winners, and the student selling the largest number of tickets was publicly honored during the night of the performance. As a climax to the school publicity campaign, several choice scenes from the play were presented to the entire student body during the weekly assembly period. Cleverly worded announcements regarding the nature of the play, admission fee, and the time of the performance were again made at this time. To climax the community campaign, the cast presented a short radio

program over a local station. As a result, not only was there a capacity crowd at the performance, but a second performance was also necessary.

With the exception of the radio station, all the means of advertising employed by this school are generally available to every director. There are also many other ways of advertising which are equally effective. What little money is expended for advertising is returned many, many times, for it really pays to advertise. The important factor in a publicity campaign of this type is the drama director, and her smooth-working publicity committee, which is composed of the House Manager, the Advertising Manager, and the Ticket Manager. Lack of resourcefulness and enthusiasm on the part of the director is fatal. The cooperation of the publicity committee is absolutely necessary. If for no other reason than that of showing the community the work that is being done in school, an advertising campaign should be a part of every project, especially the school play.

### Association of Play Publishers

The National Association of Play Publishers organized this past summer at Dayton, Ohio, should be the means of bringing about a greater spirit of cooperation and fair play between publishers and amateur producers. While the Association is primarily concerned with problems peculiar to play publishers, it is also inter-

ested in the many phases of school dramatics. We understand that one of its objectives is that of giving schools better plays. Group action on the part of our leading publishers is a forward step in establishing a better relationship among the publishers themselves, and should prove beneficial to producers.

This spirit of cooperation calls for a similar spirit of fair play among those who buy and produce the publishers' plays. The producer who tries to avoid the payment of royalty fees, who is a willful violator of the copyright laws, who fails to pay his bills, is not only subjecting himself to a prison term, but is an enemy of the thousands of honest producers. It is this individual who often makes it impossible for publishers to be as generous as they should like to be. We believe the National Association of Play Publishers has a worthy purpose behind it, and as long as this is true it deserves our support.

### Better Plays

Recently, we conducted a bit of investigation to determine how the quality of plays staged by high schools compares with that of plays given by colleges. In one column we listed the plays produced by fifty average high schools during the school year 1934-35, and in another, the plays given by fifty average colleges during the same year. Our comparison gave us some interesting facts.

While it seems true that the average college produces more major plays during the year, and chooses from a wider field than that considered by high schools, there is sufficient proof to show that the quality of the majority of plays given by high schools is not far below that of those given by colleges. In fact, in many instances the choice of plays is just as good, if not better, and many of the college favorites shared as much popularity among high schools. In the field of one-acts, high schools not only produce plays which are as good as those given by colleges, but many of them choose better plays than the average college, and produce more of them.

This news should give us all much satisfaction. High schools are rapidly leaving behind those fourth and fifth rate plays which were common eight and ten years ago. Both drama directors and students, not to mention patrons of the schools, are demanding better plays, plays which are truly worth while. Fortunately, publishers are becoming aware of this rise in standards, and are offering plays which meet these new demands. The choice of better plays brings greater dividends both educationally and financially, and we urge all dramatics teachers and directors to continue the excellent policy of producing only worth while plays.

GREASE paints are always numbered, but each manufacturer has his own system as to the order of the shades.

### Play Bureau Federal Theatre Project

The highly commendable work of the Federal Theatre Project is again brought to our attention through the service now being offered by the Federal Theatre Play Bureau. We refer to the many lists of different types of plays the Bureau is compiling for the convenience of amateur producers. Christmas Plays, Little Known One-Act Plays, Children's Plays, Plays for a Marionette Theatre, 50 One-Act Non-Royalty Plays, Negro Plays, 50 Full-Length Non-Royalty Plays, and Early American Plays are just a few of the lists now available.

Mr. George Terwilliger, supervisor of the Amateur Division of the Play Bureau, has notified us that a free copy of each of the lists is available for all tax-supported high schools. Extra copies, or copies for individuals and private groups, must be paid for at cost. We suggest that you write Mr. Terwilliger at once for information regarding the play lists now available. Send your letter to the Play Bureau, Federal Theatre Project, 303 W. 42nd Street, New York City.



The cast for *HAZEL KIRKE*—a revival produced at the University of Southern California under the direction of Florence B. Hubbard.

## Speech and Dramatics At the University of Southern California

by DR. RAY K. IMMEL

Head, Speech Department, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, Calif.

(Editor's Note: This is the first of a series of short articles designed to acquaint high school students with the work offered in Speech and Dramatics among our leading colleges and universities.)

THERE are two general types of school training for those interested in dramatics beyond high school. One is the intensive type, represented by professional schools of the theatre, in which practically all of the student's time is given over to acting and to the studies that lead to it, such as voice and diction, make-up, and the like. The other is the University School or Department of Speech, in which training in dramatics and the allied speech arts is combined with the study of English, foreign language, history, science, and other academic subjects. The course usually leads to a university degree and prepares for teaching as well as for the stage.

The School of Speech of the University of Southern California is of the second type. Courses in speech are combined with other academic subjects in such a way that the four-year course leads to the degree of Bachelor of Arts. Many go on through a fifth year and earn the degree of Master of Arts, and a very few are working for the most advanced of all degrees, that of Doctor of Philosophy.

Many opportunities outside of class await the student who is interested in the acting, directing and staging of plays. The students have their own theatre workshop, known as Touchstone Drama Shop, and in this they present plays of many kinds. The University Productions program offers still more opportunity. All of these activities are under the general

supervision of the University Director of Productions.

The following schedule of play productions is typical of the type of work done in dramatics during the school year at the University of Southern California. Last season three major productions were given. These were *Outward Bound*, by Sutton Vane; *One Sunday Afternoon*, by James Hagan, and *Everyman*, a medieval morality play arranged by Kurt Baer von Weisslingen. The Touchstone Drama Workshop presented the premiere performance of an original three-act play by Tacie Hanna Rew entitled *Two Imposters*; two programs of eight original one-act plays written by the Playwriting Class; and the presentation of three original plays for the Apolliad (annual presentation of all-campus creative arts).

The first major production of the present season was Sir James Barrie's play, *What Every Woman Knows*, staged on November 19, 20, and 21. On January 15 and 16 the Touchstone Drama Workshop will present a program of three original one-act plays.

Radio activities interest many students. Members of the radio class broadcast regularly over Los Angeles stations, creating and giving their own programs.

The Poetry Playhouse, which has attracted international attention, offers a venture into the staging of poetry, combining music, dancing and poetic interpretation into a theatrical program of great beauty and power.

The nearness of the great motion-picture studios naturally inspires some to find

places in the talking pictures. Opportunities often come to serve as "extras" in pictures, and occasionally a student develops the talent necessary to secure a position in screen acting. The School of Speech maintains courses to that end.

In university schools of speech such as this, it is possible to turn attention to the scientific aspects of oral language. Courses in voice science, psychology of speech, phonetics, and speech correction prepare the student for positions in the field of corrective speech, in which there are ever increasing openings. Clinics give ample opportunity for those interested in this work to gain experience along with their classroom instruction.

In whatever speech field the student finds himself interested, the arts and sciences of speech open up a most attractive vista. In general education, speech is assuming a more and more important place. To the high school student who plans to follow up his or her high school interests in this most fascinating subject, we who are older extend our greetings and best wishes. Wherever you go to college, you will enjoy and profit by your venture into higher education. As competition grows keener and as your artistic standards are lifted, it becomes more and more necessary for the student to equip himself with all the knowledge and skill that modern education can offer. So good luck to you, and may joy in the work and profit in the experience be yours as you carry the torch onward and upward in the years that are ahead.



# Training in Citizenship Through Play-Production

by LOIS LAW

Albuquerque, New Mexico

*Miss Law has taught English, Speech, and Dramatics at the University of Wyoming, and later, had charge of the Speech Department of Occidental College, Los Angeles, California. She also organized a Speech Department at Adams State Teachers College, Colorado, where she taught six courses in Speech. Her most recent study has been in the Central School of Speech and Drama of the University of London.*

MY interest in dramatics is educational rather than exhibitionary. By "educational," I mean fitting the individual for a fuller, more useful, more harmonious community life. Producing plays only for publicity or for financial gain or for the sheer satisfaction of being dramatic should never be tolerated in schools either by the director or the pupils. The by-products of wholesome dramatics are a thousand-fold more valuable than simply giving the play. The theater, all the equipment in it, even money that now can buy that equipment, may change so much in value as to become entirely worthless, but never does the stern character and good citizenship developed by training in play-production.

By "citizenship," I mean that citizenship which promotes the welfare of all citizens: willingness to help others to live a better life, desire to cooperate with the group or the community, an understanding of the "other fellow's problems," trying to adopt the policies of the successful citizen rather than hating him for being successful—whether he is rich or poor—loyalty to a cause in the community or throughout the nation which will obviously benefit each citizen as he deserves, an interest in making the home the best place to live, genuine gratitude for all help and favors whether great or small. A good citizen is at the same time humble and mighty. Enduring citizenship is not selfish; it reaps unselfishly as well as sows unselfishly.

So in play-production, the whole cast must work earnestly, diligently, unselfishly for the genuine good of the entire production. A student must be willing to subordinate himself to the play-as-a-whole so as to make both it and himself successful. Frequently, this will-to-cooperate needs to be taught to students, for home life has neglected to do so. But play-production can and does teach cooperation—"pours it on," the student remarks. Yet I have never seen an individual who did not acquire a stronger rather than a weaker character therefrom. Every one who takes a part in the play enjoys the friendship and congeniality of the other members of the cast and of the director, who before such intimate acquaintance seemed sort of "neuter gender." For the good of the cast even after the play has been produced, the director will encourage this congeniality. It is the unlabeled communal unity that makes for community harmony and wholesomeness. Thus through being humble, in consideration of all who are working to produce the play, each person makes the play a greater success and himself a greater success. No one

in the audience, no one on the production staff, likes the performance of a selfish, uncooperative person.

A good citizen takes and gives direction with equal grace. This characteristic can be trained through play-production to the crystalization stage. Pupils acquire the ability to give an order tactfully and to receive one cheerfully. Staging a play is like staging a battle. Orders must be executed promptly and willingly. To execute an order for a good cause should afford as much pleasure as issuing one. If it doesn't, pretend that it does until it really does.

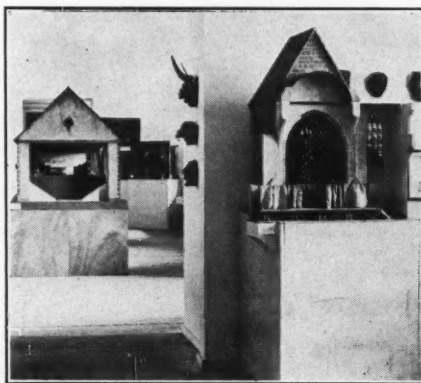
Inseparably joined to ability to take an order is the ability to take criticism. There is not another situation in one's whole school life wherein he so readily becomes agreeable to taking corrective criticism. If such correction is made of a pupil's written composition before a group of his classmates, the pupil blushes with resentment, sometimes anger. If such correction is made of his laboratory experiment before his classmates, he feels a hatred mixed with discouragement. But in play-production, he almost immediately recognizes that possibility of improvement, and he answers with "O. K." I have never heard a pupil condemn a director for being too critical; rather have I heard several wish that the director would offer more criti-

cism. The desire to improve seems common to a greater percentage of students of play-production than of any other course. I say "course" instead of "subject," for play-production includes the study of many subjects. A thorough course in dramatics affords a general education in all the sciences and arts. It is the science of sciences and the art of arts.

A wholesaler of furniture in Chicago printed this motto at the top of his letterheads: "Be sure you're right, but don't be too sure that everyone else is wrong." Certainly that motto should be written across the letterhead of wholesale citizenship. Every student of dramatics hears, at least once, criticism that carries that meaning: Be sure *you're* right, but don't be too ready to pass judgment on other members of the cast. Some students hear this criticism numerous times. Eventually every one in the play-production course has this precious bit of advice injected into his innermost blood-stream where it creates an immunity to conceit. Of course conceit is as often the result of an inferiority-complex as of a superiority-complex. But whichever has been the cause, participation in plays helps as nothing else does to cure the ailment. I have often seen a student shed the scabs of conceit and grow into a worthy self-confidence. Self-assurance overcoming that "holier than thou" attitude is ever present in dramatic training. If you know an actor who is conceited, you can be sure he was much more so before he entered into play-production. Both for the success of the play and for the sake of the student, the director is never tolerant of conceit. It is one of the worst characteristics a citizen can possess. It prompts him to be disagreeable at all times and too often leads him into fights, into dishonesty, into really bad character.

Sometimes there is the opposite to the conceited person—the shy, frightened pupil. He's afraid of you, of the big outdoors, even of Santa Claus. To your questions, he whispers brief replies. He slinks along as if all the "hounds of Heaven" were descending on his seventh vertebra. Perhaps I should say "she," for the introvert more often seems to be a girl than a boy. What delight it brings to the director to see such an individual straighten up and speak with some degree, at least, of self-confidence after she has conscientiously prepared her parts in plays. The most glowing example that I have been acquainted with, or transformation from an introvert, is a girl who, as a college freshman, had the posture of a Colonial witch and talked with her nasal resonance almost

(Continued on page 16)



STAGE MODELS  
Theatre Museum at Munich, Germany.  
(Courtesy of Dr. Lester Raines.)

# The Playwright's Research Department

by DOTY HOBART

Author of "Thoroughbred," "Every Thursday," "Double Dummy," etc.

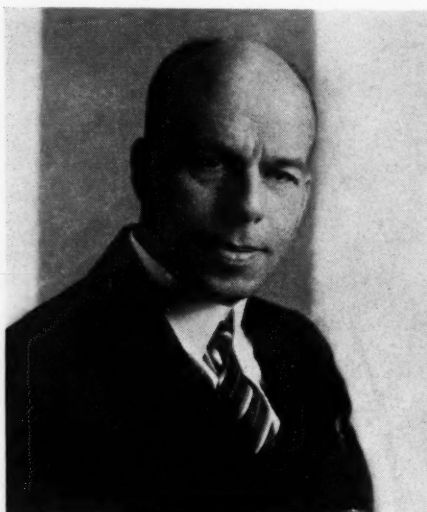
JUST as "Gallia est omnis divisa in partes tres" so the playwright's workshop, the mind, is divided into three departments. They are plot, research, and construction departments; and the busiest of all three is the research department.

Let us assume that John Doe, a high school student, decides to write a play, his first attempt at creative writing for the stage. Has he a valid reason for wanting to write it? I hope so, for if the urge is prompted only by a desire for money or fame, then I fear his labor will have been in vain. An honest urge to create is never selfishly motivated. Money and fame may reward the effort but that should be a secondary consideration. The motto of every person who creates, be he architect, shoemaker or playwright, should be, "Let me give something serviceable to the world." And remember, the "something" does not have to be of Nobel Prize pretentiousness to be worth while.

So we will give John Doe an unselfish urge to write a play. Now, this playwright sincerely believes that our lives are too drab. He feels the urge to make people laugh and, for a little while, forget their worries and sorrows. This is truly a worth while desire on John Doe's part. Not for him the writing of the heavy type of drama labeled "a problem play." Then he suddenly discovers that every play is a problem play—to the playwright. And his particular problem of the moment is to find a plot, either dramatic or melodramatic, which will become humorous through treatment of situations and characterizations.

Suppose our playwright decides to use a kidnapping as the basis of his plot. Now, kidnapping is a serious problem in real life. A criminal act, with heavy penalties attached for those involved if apprehended, it becomes melodramatic timber in the make-believe world of the theatre. But John Doe's urge to create is motivated by a desire to write comedy. What is his next step in thought progression? He makes his first visit to the research department of his workshop, the mind. And, except for occasional calls at the plot department, most of his time until actual construction starts will be spent in this department.

Who is to be kidnapped? And why? Who are the kidnappers? What makes the situation funny instead of seriously dramatic? Will audiences believe the characters involved and the situations in which the writer places them? Are there legal complications which are unfamiliar to the writer and which must be made clear to an audience? What does the writer know about the lives and habits of his characters? . . . Questions, questions,



Doty Hobart, Playwright

Mr. Hobart's recent Broadway successes are *Thoroughbred*, staged in 1933 with Florence Reed in the lead, and *Every Thursday*, produced in 1934 and starring Queenie Smith. He is also the author of over two hundred produced motion picture scripts, many radio acts, and numerous articles on radio and broadcasting. His latest play, *Through My Eyes*, was tried out by the Farragut Players at Rye Beach, N. H., this past summer, and will probably appear on Broadway sometime after the first of the year.

questions! The above are only a few of the thousands that must be answered by the playwright. And every one of them must be answered honestly.

Who is to be kidnapped? A movie star? Possibly. But wait. What does John Doe know about the life and habits of a movie star? Nothing. Is he in a position to obtain authentic information either at first hand or by printed word? No. Then, if John is wise, he should use a type of character familiar to him or one about which he can obtain accurate information. In other words, John should not go so far afield in the search for imaginary characters that he will be unable to bring them to life with the stamp of authenticity, first in his own mind and then on paper in terms of dialog and stage business.

Why is the character chosen kidnapped? The answer to this question will, of course, motivate the plot. Be he (or she) doctor, lawyer, laundryman or maiden aunt, the reason for the kidnapping must be valid in order to be believable. Sincerity and honesty must be the keynote of every plot, whether presented as tragedy or comedy. Once again, if John is wise, he will think along plot lines with which he is familiar. He does not need to have been the personal victim of kidnapping to have gained such information

as is necessary here. Surely he has read enough about kidnappers to fire his imagination as to their reasons and methods of procedure. And just as surely, at sometime he has spotted a location which he has thought would make a marvelous hideout. Now, here is John's chance to make use of the many thoughts subconsciously put away in his memory-storehouse in the past. So he drags them out and substitutes, let us say, "knowledge" for "ransom money," puts himself, mentally, in the shoes of the kidnappers and "goes to work on his victim."

What makes a situation funny instead of seriously dramatic? The chiefest tool of the comedy playwright is incongruity. So let's step into the plot department for a moment and, as an illustration, use types of characters familiar to John Doe in the creation of two plot situations for our playwright.

A group of students, through an infraction of a strict rule, have laid themselves open to possible expulsion if their misdeed is reported to the school principal. They determine to kidnap the "would-be squealer." Now, if this character is kidnapped the situation is seriously dramatic. But, suppose through a miscarriage of plans the one captured in the darkness and brought to the rendezvous turns out to be the last person in the world the kidnappers want on their hands, the principal of the school, then the situation becomes ludicrous through incongruity. What happens then? That is entirely up to the imagination of John Doe in the further development of plot and characterization. The student-kidnappers situation given are used merely to illustrate the point in question.

We now suggest that John return to his research department to build up a fool-proof characterization for his school principal, using a combination of types that, when collected in a pattern, will give the man a complete ego best suited for the promotion of John's plot. As an example, let us suggest that the school principal be married, a disciplinarian, have a righteous fear of gangsters and, unknown to the world, be an inveterate better on race horses! This last and extremely incongruous habit for a school principal to possess might become the playwright's "out" in promoting the necessary "happy ending" demanded in comedy. All this is offered as a suggestion, John, used to illustrate the method of character building for plot purposes.

We have given John Doe general answers to three questions. Enough, we think, to show him how important a part the research department of the writer's workshop plays in bringing life to his brain-child. (Continued on page 14)



# The Russian Theatre of Today

by GOLDIE SHEPHERD

Former Thespian Troupe Sponsor, Isaac C. Elston Senior High School, Michigan City, Indiana

(Editor's Note: This is the first of several articles designed to acquaint high school students with the contemporary Theatre in other countries.)

THE twentieth century has seen the development of many and various kinds of theatres all over Russia—in fact, so many that one finds it hard to classify them. Perhaps the most famous is the Moscow Art Theatre, founded in 1897 by Stanislavsky and Nemirovitch-Dancheuko, largely as a protest against the fundamental lack of art of the Petrograd Imperial productions, in which the play is forgotten for the actors. The Russian theatre escaped the Elizabethan custom of having no actresses but developed a certain individualism, which led to the "star" system. The Moscow Art Theatre was the first great active denunciation of that system. By 1902, through the generosity of a rich merchant, the Moscow Art Theatre was able to purchase premises on Kamerguersky Perevolk, a small avenue in Moscow.

The Moscow Art Theatre has a revolving stage of eight sections, a splendid lighting system, almost no decoration, an auditorium seating 1,100 people, and a group of actors known for their careful and accurate workmanship. The theatre is run on a cooperative basis; salaries are small, but most of the actors have a share in the theatre. Its public is the poorer class of the *Intelligentsia*; so the admission fee is low. These people go again and again to the same plays in a spirit of veneration that does not permit the expression of approval by the medium of clapping hands. The audience arrives promptly, and no one is permitted to enter during the course of an act. The "star" is unknown in this theatre, which is distinguished by the "ensemble" system. Some drama critics, however, feel that the Moscow Art Theatre has become stagnant, for it exists on the repertory of ten to fifteen years ago. It also continues to lavish on productions all of its resources of costume, ingenious make-up, and studied manipulation of large crowds on the stage.

In the first years of the Russian Revolution many experiments in dramatic art flourished, for it seemed as if any rash experimenter could secure a building and government support. Performances in general fell very low in all the fields of the scenic art. Provincial theatres stooped even to cheap vaudeville and questionable farces. Propaganda plays were the "rage," because the political control was so firm. Thousands of little theatres, in rooms, shacks, and cellars, were managed entirely by workers, soldiers, sailors, peasants, and students. In Moscow alone there were from three to four thousand. Many of the plays were extemporized exhibitions;

Miss Shepherd, who has a Master's Degree from Miami University at Oxford, Ohio, is head of the English Department at Isaac C. Elston Senior High School, Michigan City, Indiana. In 1930 she organized Thespian Troupe No. 91, and served as its sponsor until this fall. She has studied under Dr. Frederick Koch at the University of California, where she has spent three summers.

many dealt with recent political events. *The Storming of the Winter Palace* was a popular representation which took place in the large open space before the Winter Palace at Petrograd. The action was concerned with the overthrow of Kerensky and the enthronement of Lenin. As the play proceeded, people flocked from surrounding streets and took part, until there were sometimes 150,000 players.

This Spontaneous Theatre Movement in Russia was distinguished by two very different phases: the pieces composed by the peasants were usually of a mystical and religious character. They organized what was known as the small Mass Theatre. The big Mass Theatre was political in nature. "The theatre repertory abounds in plays, which with slight variations, adhere to a common plot formula: a new industrial plant built at record speed and triumphantly completed ahead of scheduled time, despite the machinations of a villain in the shape of a sabotaging engineer or a kulak, who has sneaked in as a worker and plays the part of a wolf in sheep's clothing"—such is Chamberlain's description of the typical play of this period.

During the severe Communist control, priests, nuns, and landlords in the new Russian plays were usually represented as

horrid wretches. Plays were changed to serve the purposes of the Communists. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* didn't need much changing, although capitalistic "goings-on" were suggested when Legree said there was no more sense in educating a "nigger" than in putting a corset on a pig, and the audience laughed in proletarian scorn. Hamlet was made a scheming parasite of the court; Ophelia drank too much vodka and drowned while under its influence; the king stepped out of his regalia while he was being painted and showed himself to be a poor little spindle-shanked thing—seeming to say that kings were always so.

In the fall of 1921, under the N. E. P., the Government decided that it could not subsidize all of the small theatres and would have to close them. When the theatres lost the support of the Government, dramatic art in Russia prospered, for the Communistic Theatre disappeared to a great degree. Private theatres opened with the right to produce any plays they liked, providing the theatre could pay the very high taxes demanded of it. In spite of these exorbitant taxes, many theatres seem to be flourishing in Russia today.

The first of the so-called "opposition theatres" is the Kamerny, founded in 1913 by Alexander Tairoff and a group of actors who broke away from the Moscow Art Theatre because it was "incompatible with modern life and art." The Kamerny is sometimes called the Cubist or Chamber Theatre. Tairoff aimed to free the stage from subjection to literature, realism, and the scenic artist. He maintained that not the text, not the scenery, and not the setting, but the actor alone was to make the play. This theatre discarded painted canvas and erected constructions of its own; it has a fondness for moving appliances: rotating tables, swings, seesaws, and even trapdoors.

The stage of the Theatre of Official Opposition is bio-mechanical, an application of constructivism to the stage. There is a scaffold-like structure to represent two stories of a house and within it a number of openings with revolving boards to suggest doors and windows. This scaffolding is supplemented by a number of wheels, somewhat like our ferris wheels, and a disk. There are also a few stepladders and two sliding boards. A curved, irregularly shaped settee represents a combination of household furniture: chair, table, sideboard, etc. Both male and female characters are dressed in suits of blue denim, similar to overalls. They have very little make-up. Performers do not walk downstairs, but slide down the sliding board. The doors are like our storm doors, except that they have no partitions but turn in on

(Continued on page 14)



King Arthur and Queen Guinivere from *THE IDLINGS OF THE KING*, staged at Lewiston, Idaho, Senior High School.

# Some Notes on Color and Lighting\*

by IVARD STRAUSS

New England Conservatory, Boston, Massachusetts

## Color and Make-up

**C**OSMETICS of any kind possess color properties. Make-up is a color art and the artist should know something of the ingredients and use of colors. In the earlier years of grease paint production the materials used were not as pure in quality as they are today; and when one considers the amount of make-up being used daily by the ladies in their efforts to appear beautiful upon the street, at the dance, or in the theatre and concert hall; and the amount of lipstick daily consumed, in the literal sense of the word, upon the lips of the girls, young and old; it is well worth an investigation into the source of colors that have been used in the past and sometimes are used today in cheap cosmetic materials.

As many pigments have their source in poisonous white lead, arsenic, quicksilver, and other harmful ingredients; the actor should realize that especially from a color standard, the cosmetics he uses should be pure and harmless. While there is no law requiring manufacturers to print their formulas, most products of repute upon the market today are pure enough to eat.

The old school of art thought of color in terms of pigments which were any dry earthy substance of mineral origin (as ochre), or of vegetable origin (as logwood), or of animal origin (as cochineal). These pigments when mixed properly with a liquid vehicle formed paint.

The three simplest pigments in use are pure red (geranium red), pure yellow (gamboge), and pure blue (ultramarine). These constitute the primary pigments. From these three every tone seen in nature can be obtained. The mixtures so resulting are called secondary colors.

The modern school of art thinks of color as the sensation of light which is peculiar to the organ of vision. Considered in this manner, the primary colors as produced by science through the medium of the spectroscope are red, green, and blue-violet; and the mixture of these colors by light will produce all the other spectrum colors, which become secondary colors of the light field. Complementary colors then become those pairs of colors which will produce white or gray when mixed; such as red and blue-green, yellow and violet-blue, green-yellow and violet. The order of such spectrum colors is: red, red-yellow, yellow, yellow-green, green, green-blue, blue, blue-violet. White is the combination of all the colors in certain proportions, and black is the absence of all colors.

Color has three dimensions: hue, value,

and chroma or intensity. Hue is the name of the color; such as red, blue, or yellow, by which is designated the difference of one color from the other. Value is the quantity of lightness or darkness in a color by itself, without regard to hue; thus there are tones of red, or tones of blue. Chroma or intensity is the amount of departure of a color sensation from that of a white or gray value. Thus red is a more intense color than blue. Pure colors in their intensity are strong and elemental in feeling, but, when neutralized, they become subtle and suggestive of refinement and charm.

## Lighting, and Its Effect on Make-up

There is one fundamental rule that is ignored by both professional and amateur artists more than any other: to achieve a perfect make-up the performer should work under the same lighting effect in the dressing room as he will have to appear under upon the stage; for lighting upon the stage very materially affects the color of the make-up. The great majority of dressing rooms are equipped with white or lemon-white lights of a varying wattage, from the dim twenty-fives to the very brilliant one-hundred-fifties. This is the chief cause of many glaring faults in make-ups, especially among amateur performers. Professionals, through experience, learn to gauge the effect of the difference between dressing-room and stage lights. An idea of how a make-up will appear at a distance or from the audience can be gained approximately by sitting in a strong white light of a similar intensity as that under which the play will be staged and viewing the make-up in a mirror which is placed at an average of from four to six feet away from the subject.

Stage lighting is not used merely for the purpose of illuminating the stage and the actor for better visibility by the audience. It has several other functions to perform in this modern day of the theater. Obviously, it serves to give added realism

to the play by simulating such natural conditions as the season of the year, the hour of the day, or the weather. Generally speaking, that is about as much as the average playgoer asks of his lighting expert; and yet, the director and the scenic designer call upon him for aid in an entirely different direction.

Lights are used to give composition and design to the setting. Design is order in all things, but especially so in the creative arts where it gives rhythm, variety, and sequence to an otherwise chaotic void. Using areas of light and shade of varying degrees of brightness and depth and in several colors, a perfect stage picture is built up by the means of controlled lighting. In the past few years the plastic stage has taken form and shape largely through the medium of stage lighting; and with it, the old painted shadow upon the scenery has gradually disappeared. The three dimensional solidity of the present day stage has been almost entirely a direct result of modern lighting.

Again psychologists have discovered the possibilities in the relation of colors to our everyday lives; so lighting upon the stage also partakes of this psychological expression, creating the atmosphere of the play with its color symbolism. Listed below are a few colors and some of their general psychological symbolic meanings.

**Black.** The absence of all light suggests gloom, darkness, mystery, death, terror, crime.

**Blue.** Distance, coldness, formality, serenity, mystery, constancy, love.

**Blue-green.** Coolness, aloofness, distance, song, idealism.

**Blue-violet.** Mysticism, mournfulness.

**Brown.** Restfulness, sluggishness, inconstancy, strength, maturity.

**Gray.** Severity, melancholy, calmness, secrecy, age, storm, winter, prudence.

**Green.** Springtime, freshness, inexperience, youth, neutrality, peace, victory.

**Yellow.** Sunlight, richness, brilliance, joyousness, cheerfulness, unity, gaudiness.

**Yellow-green.** Promise, peace, and faith (in the lighter shades); sickness, decay, cowardice, inconstancy (in the muddier shades.)

**Orange, Red-yellow.** Heat (striking but decorative), harvest, contentment, happiness, warmth, fire, satisfaction.

**Purple.** Royalty, wealth, dignity, stateliness. Warm or cool depending upon the proportions of red or blue in it.

**Red.** Heat, blood, fire, war, tragedy, danger, bravery, power, revenge, hatred, anger, passion, lust. The lighter tints of red suggest love, truth, health. The deeper tints suggest blood, glory, beauty, aggression.

**White.** Purity, truth, winter, light, peace, innocence.



Clara Ziegler's (inset) home, now Theatre Museum, at Munich, Germany.  
(Courtesy of Dr. Lester Raines.)

\* Reprinted by permission from *Paint, Powder and Make-Up*, published by Sweet and Son, New Haven, Conn. See our September-October issue, 1936, for a review of this book.



**Dark-color tones.** Suggest dignity, strength, repose, seriousness, masculine qualities.

**Light-color tones.** Suggest youth, gayety, informality, feminine qualities.

It can easily be seen from the preceding items that the actor is faced with many new problems in make-up when he performs upon a stage where lighting plays such a large, important, and subtle part of the background for the play.

It is not an unusual sight to see even a straight make-up take on a new appearance under stage lighting conditions which differ so very much from those of the dressing rooms. What formerly was a highlight under the eyes may have become a lowlight, or perhaps the color of the foundation paint or the rouge has changed or even become a blackened daub, or otherwise lost its character in a new weird concoction of color effects. Hence a lighting rehearsal, with the full make-up to be used during a performance, in a directionally lighted setting, is necessary in order that the actor may adjust his painted countenance to the playing condition of the stage. Figures 1, 2, 3 and 4 show varied effects of directional lighting, as indicated under photos.

In recent years, and especially in the little theaters, the almost universal use of amber lighting has ruined many an otherwise good make-up. The same lighting effects can be obtained through the combination of white, lemon yellow, blue, and red in varied proportions without the devastating effect of amber light. A stage equipped with this four-colored system of lighting, or one of blue, lemon, and red, can produce almost every desired effect through the combination of these same colors. If the stage is equipped with amber lights and the play is performed under such lighting, always be sure to use a shade lighter in the grease or liquid foundation paints. Because amber lights have a tendency to eat up rouge, it will be more satisfactory to use a moist under rouge with a medium dry rouge; the amount of rouge to be applied being determined by the intensity of the lighting. *Never use green* as shading on the eyelids when under amber lights because the result will give a muddy effect.

Occasionally a scene will have to be played in a simulated moon light; in other words, under a blue or blue-green light. Blue has a tendency to accentuate the rouge and the color in the foundation, turning it toward the purple tints in the color scale. The whole make-up should

be toned down with a thin coating of powder before playing in such a light. Highlights in a character make-up will disappear under blue lighting, and lowlights under amber lighting unless the actor strengthen these colors to counteract the effect of the lights. Again there may be a demand for playing in a magenta light. This also tends to bring out the color in the rouge and the foundation, but toward the reddish tints of the scale. A dark rouge should be used, the amount being determined by the intensity of the lighting. Modern lighting has created new effects in make-up; and new and startling results are constantly produced by artists in the creation of their painted characters. It is more than possi-

ble that under future lighting an entirely new system of make-up may be evolved much as new system of expression in music, art, dance, and the drama are coming forward in these days. The underlying elements will, however, remain the same. These elements have been listed as a series of make-up processes. These are the tools of the artist, and if they are properly mastered, everything else is easily acquired and developed. Since the whole, thereafter, is not the product of a set rule but the logical combination of the lasting individual elements adapted to the required situation, it thus comes closer to the ultimate as the work of individual creative art in the realm of grease paint portraiture.



Figure 1. Effect of lighting from above.



Figure 2. Effect of lighting from below.



Figure 3. Effect of lighting from side.



Figure 4. Effect of general lighting.

# Ibsen, the Unacted

by ANABEL HORSMAN

Teacher of English and Dramatics, Bliss High School, Bliss, Idaho

(Editor's Note: This is the second of a series of articles dealing with major figures and tendencies in the theatre of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, written by the research students of the Division of Drama, University of Washington, under the direction of Prof. Glenn Hughes. Dr. George Savage, under whose editorial supervision these articles are being written, is a well known playwright and a member of the teaching staff at the University of Washington, Seattle, Wash.)

THE Ibsen cult is largely an affectation, it is impossible to understand him or to explain why we do not understand him," was the cry of the conventional critics during the years when Ibsen was first being produced in this country. "There is neither health nor help in such works, nor can so one-sided and unpractical a thinker as Ibsen change the current of dramatic and literary development. Artists like Ibsen turn the house of life into a moral hospital and see nothing in men and women but interesting cases. In his various plays his characters commit every public and secret crime. They are the most pitiless collection of grafters and brutes imaginable.. The only novelty of these plays is that every one of these characters is phenomenally disagreeable. If he had a theory for the revolution and betterment of society, he never lifted his hand in any commanding way in the cause of humanity. He deliberately ponders to the lower instincts of human nature and revels in what is revolting and unclean. Like all young and ignorant thinkers he fails to distinguish between the compromises necessary to all progress in civilization and sordid hypocrisy. He jumps at the conclusion that all men are deliberate liars, mountebanks, and villains. His plays lead us to feel and believe that Scandinavia is one of the purgatories of Hell. Imagine a man with a muck rake seeking the foulest corner of a barnyard, not to cover up its loathsomeness, but to haul all its repulsive contents into greater prominence."

When *Ghosts* was presented in Boston,

At the University of Washington, the Division of Drama, under the direction of Glenn Hughes, has built up the finest American Drama Collection in any western university. Through motion picture films, typed copies, inter-library loans, photostatic reproductions, and special purchases, the already adequate bibliography is supplemented for the needs of the individual student's research. Professor Hughes and the editors of THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN think this material is so fresh, so complete, and so close to our dramatic life today that the findings of the research students should be made available not only to the future scholars in the field but to the wider public of those who will be working in the theatre of tomorrow.

Ibsen survives today through his production in the practical theatre and through his scholarly importance to the development of modern drama. His dramatic and intellectual values are accepted without question. Critics and academicians agree in estimating his influence. Yet there was a time when Ibsen was anything but accepted. Miss Horsman outlines vividly what Ibsen meant to Pre-War America and, by implication, what contemporary drama owes to his integrity.

—DR. GEORGE SAVAGE.

a minister devoted his entire Sunday morning sermon to denouncing this "atrociously immoral production". William Winter of the *New York Tribune* calls it a "noxious postulate" and says that it befouls the mind, dejects the spirit, and does no sort of good.

All the plays, not *Ghosts* alone, were the subject of attacks. Other critics wrote: "It is pure pendency to try to pretend to know what the symbols all mean. His real influence is not with the masses but with the dramatists. He may perhaps be studied as a curious and morbid phenomenon, illustrating in his inconsecutive and confused reasoning the modern tendencies toward radical conclusions from shallow

and insufficient premises, but he will not be regarded as a seer or revelator."

In 1889 when the first English performance of an Ibsen play, *Doll's House*, was given in New York, the critics, headed by William Winter, poured forth a torrent of abuse. "The play is tedious in its strenuous and inconclusive didacticism, its mawkish domesticity, its caustical reasoning, its unwholesome spirit, and its deadly dullness of the commonplace. Not in thirty years of stage industry has such a dose of tainted milk and water been poured forth upon the public mind. The piece is not in any sense a play, it is an essay. Mr. Ibsen, simply as a writer of a number of prosy, insipid, and tainted compositions, could be endured, but Mr. Ibsen obtruded as in any sense a sound leader of thought or an artist of literature is a grotesque and arrogant impertinence."

To a person who is unacquainted with Ibsen's plays these criticisms would make him wonder what horrible sins this Norwegian might really treat in his plays. If the critics were busy searching their vocabularies for words adequate to express their disgust of Ibsen, what must the plays themselves disclose? In the eighteenth-eighties plays were not written on social problems. If a production could amuse an audience or exhibit some actor or actress's particular talent it was considered adequate. Many of Ibsen's plays deal with problems developing out of family life, community life and the idealist's inability to adjust himself to society. He was convinced of the necessity of breaking up the old illusion that, although an idea may be good in itself, it gradually becomes outworn by use and that the old order must be changed or our social life will collapse.

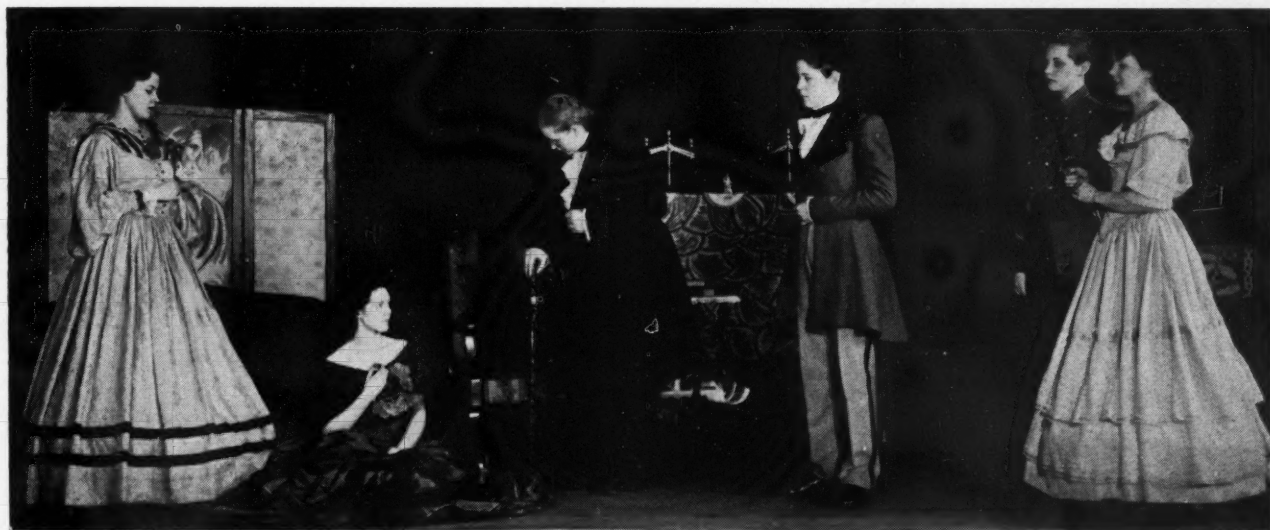
To the more liberal group of writers and critics, Ibsen was a representative of realism, a master of structure and technique, a philosopher, a reformer, and a prophet of the new womanhood. He was ranked and compared with a variety of important figures: Wagner, Sophocles, Goethe, Browning, and Moliere. Otto Heller has called him, "the greatest dramatic poet since William Shakespeare and the most fearless preacher since Martin Luther".

Hamlin Garland wrote in *The Arena* in 1890: "One closes a reading of these astounding dramas with the consciousness that something electric has passed. They stand so sheer above any dramas of the age that it is no wonder the critics are amazed and enraged. His significance is very great." In 1906 Mr. Garland was still fighting the battle for Ibsen by publishing long articles in important literary magazines on Ibsen's technique as a playwright.



Scene from Ibsen's Play, *PILLARS OF SOCIETY*, staged by Upper Iowa University, Fayette, Iowa, under the direction of Prof. Donald C. Eyssen.





Act III from *TRELAWNEY OF THE WELLS*, staged with an all-girl cast by Miss Orpha G. Pearsall at Trinity High School, River Forest, Illinois.

Brander Matthews in the same year brought out articles on how Ibsen had saved the drama from decay. "It had fallen to be no more than a toy to amuse the idle after dinner. Ibsen brought forth a succession of social dramas as though to prove that the playhouse of our own time could supply a platform whereon a man might free his soul and boldly deliver his message. No one who has followed the history of the theatre for the past quarter of a century can fail to acknowledge that these social plays of Ibsen have exerted a direct, an immediate, and a powerful influence on the development of the contemporary drama."

These "radical" critics did not accept the charges of immorality and morbidity made against the Norwegian dramatist. A writer in the *Dial* for 1895 holds up *Brand* and *Peer Gynt* as "masterpieces of robust social philosophy and high ethical aim. Their invigorating moral atmosphere has the tonic quality of which our flabby civilization is most in need, their lofty idealism may well put to shame our opportunism, our half-heartedness, and all the paltry conventionalities by which our lives are misshapen." Among other Ibsen supporters were: William Eaton, Henry James, C. H. Herford, and Montrose J. Moses.

These critics who favored the Norwegian dramatist's work belonged, for the most part, to the radical element in the literary world. Many were striving for complete realism; Ibsen seemed to be a leader in that direction. Others were eager to accept anything if it were new. Not only did this Bohemian element of the literary circle accept Ibsen, but all over the country "Ibsen fads" sprang into being. People who had neither seen nor read the plays but had heard their themes mentioned, began discussing Ibsen's philosophy, Ibsen's symbolism, and Ibsen's themes. Many of them sided with him because he was attacked by the conserva-

tives, or they believed him a champion of their cause. This host of Ibsen faddists explained his message, elucidated his symbolism and found qualities in the dramatist which he had never possessed. The labor movement, the movement for prison reform, and the groups which sought the franchisement of women all claimed him as their champion. He was called "The prophet of the Eternal Feminine" and a woman wrote in a popular magazine, "I believe that no writer of any century has said so much to the new womanhood that is vital and stimulating."

It was no doubt a misfortune that Ibsen should be first known, not as he is, but as others regarded him. His artistic purposes were misjudged, his ideas misinterpreted. It was not until the "Faddists" deserted Ibsen for a new exotic, that the thoughtful layman began to admire the dramatist for his mastery of stage craft, his creation of new characters, and his great artistry.

It would seem, from the amount of controversy that occurred over Ibsen, that he was one of the most widely produced playwrights of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The truth is that his plays were seldom produced and that the runs were very short. At first only matinee performances were attempted; private presentations to invited audiences were given; and a single performance was sometimes undertaken late in the spring at the very close of the season. Only well-known actresses dared to attempt the parts and when they did they were rated "fools" by the conservative critics and "brave women" by the liberals.

In 1889, Richard Mansfield permitted Beatrice Cameron, who later became his wife, to do a Saturday afternoon matinee of *Doll's House*. This was the first New York performance of an Ibsen play and was presented ten years after the play left Ibsen's hands. The criticism of the production was so great that no further attempt was made to give a second perform-

ance, until a Wednesday afternoon two years later. Mrs. Fiske lost money on a performance of the play in 1894, but when she revived it at the close of the season in 1902, it proved a fair success. In May of 1905 Ethel Barrymore closed her season with *Doll's House* and two years later Nazimova gave it its first run of any length.

Between 1889 and 1913 only thirty-five productions of Ibsen's plays were placed on the professional stage and but sixteen of the twenty-two published plays were given performances. Norman Hapsgood wrote in 1901, "Ibsen is so important and there is so little opportunity of seeing him on the American stage, that I went down to Washington to see Blanche Gates give a special performance of *Hedda Gabler*." Other critics complained of the difficulty of seeing Ibsen's plays, of the very seldom performances, and of the small audiences who attended. It was not until Mrs. Fiske and Nazimova obtained enough financial backing and personal following to permit them to present a number of Ibsen plays in repertory that it was more than occasionally possible to see one of these much-talked-of plays.

The reasons for the few productions of Ibsen's plays may be summarized under three heads. First: producers were afraid to take the financial risk of producing a play that very possibly would only dare to run one night; second: it was difficult to get intelligent interpreters for the very difficult roles; and third: the host of Ibsen faddists discouraged the great middle class from taking him seriously and wishing to see his plays.

Ibsen, in America, was a dramatist both praised and blamed, who, during the height of the critical warfare, was practically unproduced. When his plays ceased to arouse moral controversy and when his productions were attended only as plays and not as blasphemies, he achieved a minor and steady popularity.



WHY THE CHIMES RANG  
Produced under the direction of Miss Thelma Ryckman at Milwaukie (Oregon) Union High School.

## Observations On Our Summer Theatres

by G. HARRY WRIGHT

Department of Speech, Kent State University, Kent, Ohio.

IT was the author's good fortune to make a tour of the New England states during the summer just past and to visit a great many of the summer theatres, interviewing directors and staff of most of them and seeing productions at a few. It is my purpose now to report to Thespians the results of these observations and to answer some of the questions that I have been asked about summer theatres.

The thing that struck me first about summer theatres was their number. In a country where the theatrical season is supposed to last only about seven or eight months, and where the commercial theatre is practically limited to a few large cities, it was amazing to see the number of theatres operating successfully in the hot off-season months of the summer in locations varying from the nearest center of a large city to a rural setting many miles from the nearest center of population. If we start north from New York City, within an hour we can reach Mt. Kisco. Here one of the most successful of the summer theatres has been running for many seasons. Nearby is White Plains. Here another theatre is run by the same company. Cutting over into Connecticut we next encounter the "Theatre in the Woods" at Norwalk, which specializes in light opera during the summer. A few miles farther on at Westport, if we look sharply as we drive along the Boston Post Road, we see a tiny neon sign indicating the presence of the "Country Play

House," which is run by Lawrence Langer of the Theatre Guild, and operates in what was once an ordinary barn but which has been transferred into a beautiful rustic theatre. Next we encounter the New Haven and Yale School of the Drama. This is dark in the summer season—most of its students and staff being scattered throughout the Northeastern states working in the various summer theatres. Going east from New Haven, we next encounter the summer theatre at Ivoryton, located in a quaint little town hall nestled in the center of an expansive green campus studded with dignified shade trees under which the patrons sit and sip cool drinks during the intermission. At Madison we find the "Post Road Players" and, if we happen by at mid-day, we see young men and women sitting round the campus and on the steps of the neat little brick building rehearsing their parts. Continuing east we find at New London, the "Griswold Players" ensconced in their theatre in the Griswold Hotel, playing to a distinctly aristocratic clientele of summer vacationers. At Matunuck, Rhode Island, we find the "Theatre-By-The-Sea," a large, well-equipped playhouse rising majestically from a flat and unbroken plain. From here, if we have time, we may go to Philadelphia Rice's summer playhouse at Oak Bluffs on Martha's Vineyard, or to the Nantucket Theatre on Nantucket Island, both reached by ferry. Touring now toward Cape Cod, we find the Beach

Playhouse at West Falmouth near the southern juncture of the long arm of the cape with the mainland of Massachusetts. Venturing out onto the Cape we discover the "Cape Playhouse" and the "Cape Cinema" at Dennis, both models of modern theatre architecture and organization. Away out on the extreme hook of the cape we find the quaint and romantic "Wharf Theatre," built out over the water of Boston Bay at Provincetown. It was here that the genius of Eugene O'Neil found its first development when his earlier sea plays were produced to the accompanying noises of the sea by the "Provincetown Players." Leaving the cape we next find the "South Shore Players" at Cohasset, twenty miles south of Boston, performing in a tiny colonial town hall. We continue northward to the theatre at Gloucester and from there northward to where the tip of New Hampshire juts out between Massachusetts and Maine to touch the sea. Here at Rye Beach we find the "Farragut Players." Crossing into Maine and going north for one hundred miles or more, we come to Skowhegan; where in the fashionable summer colony of Lakewood amid surroundings of unsurpassed natural beauty we find the "Lakewood Theatre," one of the most beautiful of them all and the oldest summer theatre in America. It has been operated since 1901. Crossing into New Hampshire and coming down the Connecticut Valley on the Vermont side, we find another summer theatre at Brattle-



boro. Our next stop is in the Berkshire Hills of western Massachusetts. Here at Stockridge we may see productions of successful New York hits at the comfortable and tastefully decorated "Berkshire Playhouse." This list by no means exhausts the roll of our eastern summer theatres. Some of the important ones are omitted, but it at least gives an idea of their wide distribution and of the great number which the casual visitor to New England might encounter on an ordinary vacation tour.

The second thing that impressed me about summer theatres was the quality of work being done and the distinguished names connected with the productions. The performances which we saw were comparable to the average offerings of the Times Square theatres, and a list of the members of the acting companies looks like a "Who's Who" of the professional New York Theatre. During our tour we encountered such plays as: *The Would-Be Gentleman*, *Libel*, *The Old Maid*, *Merrily We Roll Along*, and *Lysistrata* to mention only a few. The names of William Faversham, Jr., Rosamond Pinchot, Dorothy Gish, Violet Heming, Mary Rogers, Sally Rand, and Jimmy Savo comprise a partial list of the distinguished players offered to our gaze.

The equipment of the theatre varied perhaps more than anything else. Their buildings ran the entire gamut from deserted barns with cramped space and the barest essentials of stage equipment to large commodious, especially designed and beautifully decorated theatre buildings with the finest equipment which money and advanced knowledge can secure.

However, notwithstanding the distinguished personnel and the enthusiasm of the groups together with the excellent productions that most of them create there are several regrettable observations which must be reported.

First of all, the summer theatres are almost without exception in the grip of a commercialism which tends to defeat their highest purpose. It is the conviction of most people that the greatest justification for the existence of summer theatres lies in their ability to do three things: first to bring the drama to large numbers of people who would not be able to see Metropolitan productions because of the cost; second, to break down the prejudice between professional and amateur which is stifling theatric art in America; and third, to provide a starting point for ambitious young people who would like to get a foot-hold in the theatre.

The first of these purposes, is defeated in some instances by too high admission prices. An admission fee of \$2.75 top, while it may be within the range of wealthy New York audiences, is hardly conducive to reaching the vast number of people who want theatre but are not able to pay its price. In fairness to the general run of summer theatres, however, it must be said that a majority of them are

by no means guilty of this practice and the very fact that a great many of the really good theatres survive at lower prices is indicative of the fact that the others could if they would. The Theatre, as an art, will never progress in America as long as it is kept an expensive toy of the rich.

The second purpose, that of breaking down of prejudice between amateurs and professionals, is defeated by the fact that the management and organization of practically all of the summer theatres is dominated by professional men and women of the theatre of New York, whose attitude toward the amateur and toward the theatre as anything but a means of livelihood is distinctly unfriendly. It is true that the theatres have a sprinkling of University people, particularly from Yale, but they are, for the most part, relegated to minor positions with little voice in formulation of policy, and one of the first things that they learn is to scorn the lowly amateur.

The third purpose, that of introducing new and fresh talent to the theatre is defeated by the fact that many of the summer theatres serve as a haven for unemployed professional actors during the off-season in New York. It is an axiom of the professional theatre that names mean box-office, and too often the only appeal offered by a summer playhouse is the number of well known names it can offer. Frequently these are the names of stars who have passed their zenith and are definitely on the decline, but the canny managers realize that thousands of us who have not seen these performers in their hey-day are willing to pay our money for a fleeting glimpse of their faded talents. Most of these performers can be secured at ridiculously low cost, since they are unemployed during the summer and since many of them have been replaced long ago in Metropolitan productions by more virile talent. Some of the theatres have schools, with entrance fees running from a few dollars up to several hundred. A limited number of apprentices are allowed to remain on the premises and to work in the construction of scenery. They are, however, invariably lost in the shuffle and it is indeed rare when one of their number is allowed any significant part in the artistic work of the theatre. In fairness to some, it must be stated that there are exceptions to this general statement. The "Berkshire Playhouse," for instance, runs an excellent school, and there may be others. Too often, however, the fees of the apprentices merely serve to eke out the financial resources of the theatre.

These are faults arising directly out of commercialism. They are fundamental to the philosophy and the scheme of life of those who manage most of the summer theatres. Nobody is to blame, for its actors and managers must live, but the fact remains that if the summer theatre is to serve the high purpose which its founders envisioned it must be free from commercialism.

Furthermore, it must be free from the

geographical boundaries of northeastern and eastern New York. With a few exceptions, notably the "Barter Theatre," Virginia; and Jasper Deeter's "Hedge-row Theatre" in Pennsylvania, the summer theatre exists only east of the Hudson. West of that river there exists a nation atingle with the dramatic impulse ready and awaiting for an outlet. To further the spread of dramatic culture in America we must have, not only in New England but in strategic locations all over the nation, non-commercial theatres and schools which will safeguard and maintain our dramatic heritage. These theatres and schools must not depend upon box-office receipts for their support. They must not embody in their policies the hard and fast rules of the professional. They must look to the students and teachers in our schools and colleges for the young, fresh and idealistic point-of-view that is needed. They must not employ the hollow shell of a decayed professional talent. Most important of all, they must accept the youth of the nation as the focal point of concentration in instilling the culture and philosophy of the drama to the end that we may develop in our land a national drama nurtured by the sincere devotion of the whole people.

An initial move in this direction will be made next summer in Cleveland, Ohio, where a summer theatre and dramatic school known as "The Willow Glenn Theatre and School of the Allied Arts," will be inaugurated.

The fundamental idea underlying this scheme will be the training of our high school and university people, both students and faculty, in the authentic arts of the theatre, giving ample opportunity for participation in actual theatric endeavors by every member of the group. The site will be beautiful Wildwood Park on the shore of Lake Erie, fifteen minutes by Lake Shore Boulevard from Public Square, Cleveland. Here, in the very center of American dramatic activities west of the Hudson, will be presented young America's opportunity to exercise its devotion to the theatrical art. Besides a wide variety of recreational facilities the plant will include two theatres; one a modern outdoor theatre, the other an excellently equipped indoor playhouse. A faculty has been assembled consisting of University professors of the drama, augmented by cooperating professionals everyone of whom has a University degree. Although preliminary announcements have just been made, the response has been widespread and enthusiastic. Applications for membership have been received from such distant points as Texas, Florida and Kentucky. It is the dream of the founders that the combined summer theatre and camp will be the inspiration for similar projects all over the nation so that within the not too distant future the lover of the theatre may be enabled to see and participate in the best that the American Theatre has to offer, no matter where he or she may live.



THE TAMING OF THE SHREW, Act 3, Scene 1.

Produced by Mr. Eugene R. Wood at Webster Groves (Mo.) High School. Mr. Walter Zemitzsch, designer.

## The Russian Theatre of Today

(Continued from page 7)

central pivots. In going out, the actor holds to the door and by pushing himself off the ground with his feet, he swings out of the room. The wheels and disk supply the bio-mechanics of the performance. They remain stationary until a psychological moment arises in the mind of one of the characters; then they begin to turn. As there are no wings or masking portions to the stage set, the stage hand who turns the wheels is visible to the audience. The wheels are revolved with a rapidity in proportion to the psychological crisis of the play. There is no curtain; the stage darkens for a few seconds at the end of each act to mark divisions in the performance. Patrons of this theatre are mainly of the younger generation.

According to the Theatre of Heroistic Experimentalism, everyone has a certain rhythm and speaks, lives, and moves in accord with a certain tempo. Therefore each stage character is furnished metric rhythm, according to which he moves, acts, and speaks. To convey the theory to the audience and give the keynote to the actor, someone at the piano strikes off a few notes before each actor appears and also as accompaniment to the actor in his opening lines. This theatre also uses no curtain; stage hands appear at the end of each act to change the scenery.

The Theatre of Parody uses two sets of actors; one set mimics the acting mannerisms of the actors presenting the play. The Semperante or Theatre of Improvisation is an intellectual curiosity, presenting plays improvised as the performance goes on. The Theatre of the Revolution is performing plays with a political mission.

A brief survey of a few of Moscow's many theatres today may serve to explain why Moscow has been called "the city of too many theatres."

The Gabina, situated on one of the side streets of Moscow, is the only ancient Hebrew theatre in the world. The State Children's Theatre belongs to the center group of theatres, the aim of which is to express a proletarian ideology and to raise the level of the culture and interpretative

power of the working class. Tram is the Theatre of Working Youth. The Krasnoi-Presny Theatre has introduced three new forms in the theatre: enclosure of a section of the audience in the action of the play, construction of a stage the full length of the auditorium, and a stage surrounded on all sides by audience, which in turn is surrounded by more playing space. Other Moscow theatres whose names indicate the nature of their work are: Red Army Theatre, Theatre of Satire, Moscow Trade Union Theatre, and the Gypsy Theatre.

Alexander Tishler, designer for the newly organized Gypsy Theatre in Moscow, has built two new contributions to the World Theatre: the use of national forms as a basis for creative work and the use of material as motive. For the setting of Lope de Vega's *Sheep's Well*, Mr. Tishler used basketry to define the time and place of the play as mediaeval, peasant Spain and determined the shape of the playing space as a great basket. In the play, *Chapaev*, which describes the violent fighting in the North during the Civil War, he used fur as a motive. For *Carmen* he laid emphasis on gaily colored costumes, moving before a plain blue cyclorama.

To satisfy the demands in the factories for mass open-air theatres in Russia, stage artists have constructed a crane as a technical form, fulfilling its industrial task in the course of the working day and making a very satisfactory but simple stage for open-air performances. On the crane are erected three permanent platforms, connected with each other by ladders. These platforms serve almost any purpose in the plays. The Blue Blouse troupes have costumes which answer the purpose of stage decoration and stage property and blend with the stage setting.

Theatres are almost as numerous in Leningrad as in Moscow and are of the same general type. One of particular interest, however, is the Ethnographic Theatre, where one may find some representation of every Soviet nationality, either in song, opera, folk-dance, drama, or dance drama. The work of this theatre has grown to such a point that last

fall the Northern People's Theatres took over three productions and all northern material from the original theatre.

At least two ideas distinguish the modern Russian theatre: it requires an adaptable stage and an equally flexible audience space, and its productions are devised to break down the barrier that has always existed between audience and actor, despite the attempt of various devices to bring the spectator into personal touch with his entertainer. All Soviet architects make some provision for these ideas. Plans for the new Kharkov theatre call for ramps rather than stairways and a semi-circular stage with an inner and outer revolving stage. To facilitate change of scene, various mechanical devices, such as traveling cranes with trolleys both overhead and below the stage floor and carriage elevators for both wings, have been used. There are few limitations on the choice of plays other than that they must not be counter-revolutionary or fascist, and there has always been a place in Soviet theatres for the classics.

Today the theatre of the Soviet Republics seems more alive than ever before. According to Halsted Welles, director of the Yale Dramatic Association, it is serving its age and society in a manner far better than the American theatre serves us. Mr. Welles believes that artistically the New York theatre has little to learn from Moscow, but he wishes that we could learn Russia's method of giving our actors a chance to work and our public a chance to see them.

## The Playwright's Research Department

(Continued from page 6)

So much depends on honest writing—believable situations, believable characterizations, believable dialog, and a believable location for the story—that only by an honest use of the playwright's research department will successful results be achieved.

To sum up the idea, John, you must know just as much about your fictional story, its location and the life, habits and temperments of each and every character brought into it as though you were a reporter covering a major event of national or international importance before you write a line. This means a sincere application to and use of research. In the majority of cases this includes physical as well as mental research for the playwright. For instance—if you will permit me to become personal for a moment—in the preparation of one play I found it necessary to do physical research in twenty-two different subjects, from Astrology to Whistle-signals of locomotive engineers.

Therefore, my first advice to those who would write plays can be expressed in three words: *Know your subject.*

So, good luck, John Doe, and may the time spent in your research department be happy, creative and productive.





#### TAMING OF THE SHREW

Produced by Mr. Eugene R. Wood at Webster Groves (Mo.) High School. Reading from left to right: top row—Grace Gebelein as Kate, Stoddard Stanton as Grumio, Bruce Alger as Petruchio, and Bob Hille as Gremio; bottom row—Bruce Alger as Petruchio. Tom Murphy as Baptista, and Sidney Busch as Kate.

## The Taming of the Shrew

by RUTH MEILE

Member of Thespian Troupe No. 191, Webster Groves (Mo.) High School.

IT was in 1594 that Will Shakespeare tossed the manuscript of *The Taming of the Shrew* to his fellow players in London, and it was in April of 1936 that Eugene R. Wood staged that rollicking comedy for the approval or disapproval not only of Websterites but even of St. Louisians and out-of-town guests. Approval or disapproval? Could remarks like "Superb!" "Gigantic!" "The best thing the dramatic department has ever done!" mean disfavor? Could enthusiastic curtain calls display disappointments? The seventeen hundred who attended were convinced beyond a doubt of the success of the *Taming of the Shrew*.

The Little Theatre of Webster Groves High School held greater crowds than ever before. During the six regularly scheduled public performances chairs were set up in the aisles to accommodate the crowds, and at one of the matinees the Shakespearean-minded students sat on floors, window sills, and even on the edge of the stage. Furthermore, a special matinee was given because of popular demand

—to say nothing of the command performance reserved months before the opening date. At the close of these eight performances, the cast of the *Taming of the Shrew* finished the longest run any play has ever had in the development of the dramatic department of Webster Groves High School.

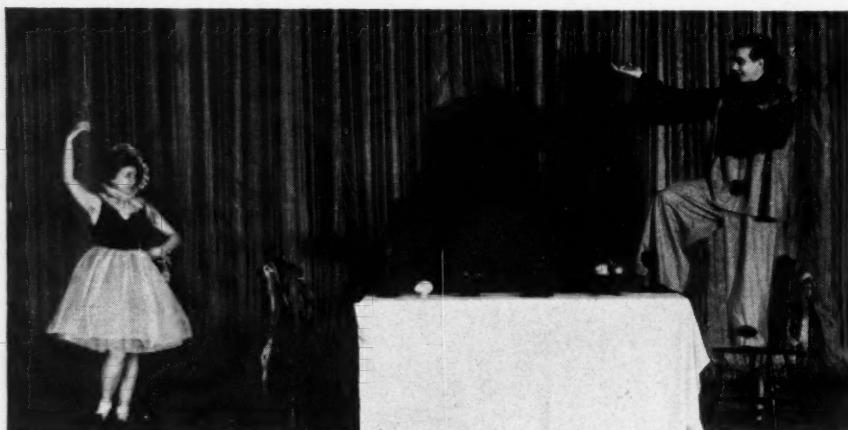
Equally as much pleasure was derived from the production by those "back stage". The simple Shakespearean setting as well as the precise lighting and the gorgeous costuming transformed the stage of the Little Theatre from a present day stage to a 16th century Italian scene. The setting was ideal in that it created the proper visual atmosphere with its double arch and two steps, gave a commanding position for exits and entrances. By the addition of drapes and a fireplace the set was changed from a garden to the interior of Petruchio's home. The picturesque costuming set into this background made the *Taming of the Shrew* a most eventful production.

Even with all these beneficial elements this production would not have been so successful without the outstanding performance of the all-star casts. The members showed a fine interpretation of their parts and easily, skillfully, and artistically presented their roles. Because of the great amount of energy required for the presentation of their roles, the main leads for women were double-cast.

### National Drama Week

Because of the early beginning of Lent this year, Drama Week will be celebrated from February 1st through February 7th, 1937. The national program for this week will be announced about January 1 from the New York office of The Drama League of America.

Schools are urged to observe the celebration of Drama Week. Social gatherings, play productions, exhibits, spoken appeals, newspaper articles, etc., will do much to direct public attention to this annual event. Programs should be planned early. High schools affiliated with the National Thespian Society will be provided with a list of suggestions for the observance of Drama Week.



Scene from *ARIA DA CAPO*, given by Thespians at Ellenville (N. Y.) High School. Directed by Miss Grace Everest.

## Training in Citizenship Through Play-Production

(Continued from page 5)

shut off. After participation in one one-act play she had overcome to a great extent that habit of closing her nasal resonance, and after a year's training in play-production she had almost completely cured the bad habit.

You ask if transformation is usual? No, such complete transformation in a person of her age and in so short a time is not usual, but it is possible. Certainly the acquiring of poise, a more expressive voice, of self-confidence, to some degree at least, are for every pupil possible. Of the hundreds of students I have helped to study and produce more than a hundred plays, every one improved remarkably in poise, voice, congeniality, self-confidence, willingness to cooperate—all in all a marked growth in personality.

You may ask what voice and poise have to do with citizenship. A visit to the penitentiary will conclusively answer that question. Recall the voices and poise of the bandits in the play, *The Petrified Forest*, not a pleasing one among them. Again and again we are told that the reason for the powerful leadership of both Hitler and Mussolini is poise and knowledge of how best to use the voice. But you need not go to Europe to hear Hitler and Mussolini or to visit a penitentiary to conclude that a pleasant voice claims more friends and attention and harmony than a harsh, inarticulate one. The response I get from speaking the two words, "Come here," depends upon the intonation and quality of voice I put into them. Too, the manner in which I speak them governs my facial expression. One hears everywhere that voice and poise are the chief attributes to a pleasing personality, and I am sure that a pleasing personality makes for good citizenship.

One priceless phase of training in citizenship which no other course in high schools or colleges offer is that of "getting the other fellow's point of view." In many junior high schools of California, pupils

are given a longer or shorter period of training in some few trades, not so much to make certain tradesmen of these pupils as to teach them an appreciation and understanding of the life of these tradesmen. To understand thoroughly the trade by which a man makes his living is to understand the man himself and to like that man better. It seems human to condemn without reason the person or organization or activity of which the condemner knows nothing. So we must understand him to like him.

In play-production, the study of a role to portray it as the character would and does exist in real life brings about an

## TEACHERS OF SPEECH CONVENTION

The twenty-first annual meeting of the National Association of Teachers of Speech will meet in St. Louis, Mo., on December 29, 30 and 31, at the Statler Hotel.

Professor John Dolman, Jr., author of "Art and Play Production," is preparing a most interesting program and dramatic demonstrations for the convention. Professor Hallie Flanagan, of F. T. P., will give an interesting report of the activities in her field, while Barrett H. Clark, of the Dramatic Guild in New York City, will discuss the new field of plays offered directly to us by the author. There will be interesting play projects also, and no one interested in plays and play production can afford to miss these programs. Also Miss Grace Ingledue will bring a play, written by high school students, which will be produced by them at the convention. This should be extremely interesting.

The American Speech Correction Association will meet again with our body. In fact, every strand of speech education will be covered in discussion, demonstration, and lecture, by prominent speakers from all over the country.

The Local Committee in St. Louis is preparing delightful social entertainment, and expects to have some very fine performances outside the regular meetings.

MAUD MAY BABCOCK, President,  
National Association of Teachers  
of Speech.

understanding of that class of persons which the role typifies, and an understanding promotes harmony and friendliness. Besides, a detailed study of others assists one to see his own faults. To "know thyself," one should first know what to look for and how to look. A student once asked me if he might direct a play before he took a part in one because it was easier to see someone else's faults. Since then I have frequently set students to directing early in the course so as to impress them with the numerous shortcomings of the members of any cast. That directing experience proved far more impressive than a verbal lecture ten times as long. The process helps remarkably to cultivate introspection, that much neglected occupation, though very necessary to making wholesome citizenship.

The study and practice of stagecraft contribute much toward knowledge of how best to build and arrange the furniture in one's home. Balance of line, volume, color and the psychology of the use of color will make home a more pleasant place to live.

One group of students named a benefit from study of dramatics which I had not seen. They believed that memorizing lines precisely had taught them to think before speaking in ordinary conversation or in recitations in other courses. I am inclined to believe that the benefit rather was learning to concentrate. Not for a fraction of a minute would an actor dare to let his mind wander from the lines he is to speak nor from the lines the others on the stage are speaking. In no other course does the student get so thorough a training in concentration.

Punctuality should be characteristic of wholesome citizenship. Punctuality certainly is stressed throughout rehearsals and for the final production. I never fail to impress upon the members of a cast that a tardiness of even so little as five minutes wastes much time for everyone in the cast. A member who is late five minutes wastes not only his five minutes but five times the number in the cast, often amounting to hours. Besides, he should be, must be, considerate enough of others not to waste their time or cause them to be tardy elsewhere because the rehearsal was late.

This question was once asked me: "Play-production surely teaches the attributes of wholesome citizenship, but does that teaching carry over?" I emphatically answered and do answer "Yes," and usually in the proportion in which the student took it, or perhaps in the proportion in which it took," for the director cannot do all; the pupil must help himself through the suggestions and criticisms of the director. Of course, the plays themselves as selected by a prudent director are lessons in good citizenship, without being "preachy."

Isn't it time that we were devoting more time to play-production through which desirable citizenship is taught?



## PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR THE BUSY DIRECTOR

EDITED BY MARGARET L. MEYN

Material appearing in this department is selected with the hope that it proves helpful to the busy director of dramatics. The editor will welcome short contributions of a practical nature concerning problems of acting, staging, and directing.

### How to Direct Love Scenes



MISS MEYN

**W**HY are "love scenes" usually the weakest part of a play, and the most dreaded by the director to interpret? Interpretation of these scenes may be slighted by the director because of audience criticism or inherent fear of making the love scenes too "mushy."

Nevertheless, every good play has the formula "from emotions to emotions." And since the world believes that "action speaks louder than words," the emotions to be reached are those of the audience.

Beware of love scenes! Give much attention and thought to accurately conveyed emotion, the great fundamental of good drama. This emotion may be conveyed well by observing action, characterization, and dialogue. Likewise, the business must be natural, appropriate to the character, the locale, and the situation, and must be rich in detail. It must be in keeping with the rhythm of the play, character, and in the tempo of the scene or episode.

In any love scene, a climax is essential. Climax rests upon (a) the right feeling for order in presenting ideas; (b) correct sense of what is weaker and stronger in phrasing emotions, and (c) appreciation of feeling of audience toward emotions presented.

In this business of directing love scenes, first, the director must take into consideration the script itself, and find the intellectual pattern which makes for the emotional response of the play. Generally, delicate love scenes, requiring a softening effect, can be staged effectively up stage left to give aesthetic distance. If a fire place is available on the set, soften the love scene by using that area. For farce love scenes and those of a bolder nature, center down stage may be used. In a royal love scene, centered around a throne, utilize the center, back stage or up stage. Do not hurry over love scenes, as this may "kill that scene" of the play and thwart the aesthetic beauty in stage picturization.

As the audience must be the first consideration, watch the beginning and the ending of a love scene lest undesired emphasis results. Prepare the characters for

their feelings toward each other in the play, and cause them to see the "why" and "wherefore," of their reactions to each other in that particular scene. Vary the acting areas of love scenes. Take a love scene centered around a throne. The supposed suitor claiming his love for the queen, would assume a position of kneeling on his down stage knee, with hand extending toward the queen, while he continued his expression of love. Again, if farce is desired in a love scene, the hero may edge over to the heroine, awkwardly, shift his feet, stammer, finally sputter out his words jerkily, and at the same time make movements spontaneous with the words.

In another scene, suppose Claudius, who was a suitor of Marna, enters Marna's home. He sits beside her on the davenport, and converses about his difficulty in seeing her that evening. In the first place, Claudius must really have entered in character, but how? Should he come in quickly, impetuously, or ardently? Should he pause on the threshold before entering or should he dash in the house leaving the door ajar? This must be decided upon by the director as the situation requires. Also, watch carefully the love scene staged around a davenport, that every area of that piece of furniture is utilized to produce variety and spirit in the scene.

If the director carefully observes such factors as acting areas, positions, gestures, facial expression, pantomime, rhythm and tempo, climax, and intonation of the voice in the interpretation of love scenes, the scenes will not only be rich in detail, but aesthetic beauty and atmosphere will be created, in turn causing the audience to react favorably toward the performance.

### Alpha Psi Omega Convention

Sponsors of National Thespian troupes are cordially invited to attend the second Grand Rehearsal of Alpha Psi Omega, parent society of The National Thespians, which will be held at the Hotel Statler in St. Louis, Missouri, on Monday, December 28. The entire Rehearsal will be completed in one day in order to permit delegates to attend the Convention of the National Association of Teachers of Speech which will be held in the same hotel on December 29, 30 and 31.

There will be no fees charged for admission to any of the session of the Alpha Psi Omega Rehearsal. A joint banquet of Alpha Psi Omega and The National Thespians will be held at 8 p. m. in the Hotel Statler—the price per plate will not exceed \$1.50. If you plan to be present at the banquet, it would be well for you to notify The National Thespian headquarters in advance.

## MOVIES We Have Seen SCREEN NEWS

- \* Poor—don't throw your money away.
- \*\* Average—if you don't have much, miss it.
- \*\*\* Good—it is worth the admission fee.
- \*\*\*\* Excellent—borrow money if necessary.

**\*\*Libeled Lady.** Were it not for the wretched acting of Jean Harlow, we would be tempted to give this film three stars. *Libeled Lady* is a comedy in which such matters as libel and divorces are given a dramatic treatment similar to that which Hollywood is accustomed to in actual life. The story is rather shakey, but a supply of clever lines and good acting on the part of William Powell and Myrna Loy result in some lively entertainment. Walter Connolly turns in a perfect characterization of the millionaire whose daughter (Myrna Loy) is the victim of a libelous newspaper story. The counter scheme to stop the ruinous suit against the paper constitutes whatever plot there is.

**\*\*\*The Charge of the Light Brigade.** It is often amusing to see how Hollywood takes an incident from history or literature as an excuse for a story of its own invention. This film, presumably based upon the episode of the Crimean War made famous in the poem by Lord Tennyson, is typical of what we have in mind. The famous "charge" occupies about five or ten minutes at the close of the picture; the rest of the story is not only somewhat detached from this incident, but has for its setting India, and not Crimea. The war scenes are very realistic and Errol Flynn and Donald Crisp play their roles with merit. In the film the "charge" is given the color of an heroic deed; in reality it was the tragic result of a stupid blunder by the British officers.

**\*\*\*\*Dodsworth.** If you have not seen Walter Huston's stage presentation of Sinclair Lewis' novel, *Dodsworth*, you will find this film an excellent substitution. Not only does Walter Huston give as praiseworthy performance as he gives on the stage, but the medium of the screen makes it possible to include all those details of setting which really belong to the story but which are of necessity eliminated from the stage version. Ruth Chatterton and Mary Astor give excellent performances as Fran Dodsworth and Edith Cortwright, respectively. If you have not done so, read the novel before you see this picture.

**\*\*The Big Game.** The outstanding virtue of the picture is the fact that it is based upon a story by the youthful writer, Irwin Shaw, who gave us the play, *Bury the Dead*, last spring. This is just another of those football pictures that make their perennial appearance at the opening of the gridiron season. The football thrills are furnished by last year's All Americans. If you want to see a game of football, see your local high school or college schedule.

**\*\*The Man Who Lived Again.** Boris Karloff tries the risky business of exchanging people's souls, and for a while he does so with many dramatic moments for the audience. There are several bits of good acting, especially the work done by Frank Cellier. If melodrama of the Karloff brand keeps you awake at night, we urge you to skip this one.

### WE HOPE TO SEE:

*Romeo and Juliet.* We understand that this is Hollywood's best interpretation of a Shakespearean play. Norma Shearer and Leslie Howard have the roles of the "immortal lovers."

*Camille.* This will be the sixth motion picture version of the Dumas classic. Greta Garbo plays the part of Marguerite Gautier and Robert Taylor, the part of Armand.

*Rembrandt.* The role of the famous Dutch painter is taken by Charles Laughton. We think this should be an outstanding picture.

# The Ambling Thespian

by EARL W. BLANK

*Thespian National Director and Director of Dramatics at California State Teachers College, California, Penn.*

## Congratulations to York Community High School Troupe



MR. BLANK

I LIKE the sound of the "step-up" system employed by Miss Wanio of York Community High School of Elmhurst, Illinois. A definite system is always more effective than a general method of simple acceptance to membership after the usual requirements are achieved.

## Idealism in the Russian Theatre

I am afraid that it remains for our high schools, colleges and little theatres to capture for America the fervor and artistic ideals of the Russian Theatre. From September first to September tenth of this year, Moscow and Leningrad staged a theatre festival which was visited by people from all over the world. Russia has become more theatrically minded than ever. There are now 600 theatres there instead of 250 before the Revolution. Of the 600, 150 of them are national theatres. There is a rapid growth of children's theatres also. Henri Lenormand, French playwright, has this to say of the Russian Theatre: "In Moscow I felt that I was in the 'promised land' for art . . . Soviet art is great." Our commercial theatre does not allow for great art except in isolated cases, but we can raise the standards by good hard work and real study. If we do this even in our small way, we can help perhaps to place the art of the theatre where it rightfully belongs.

## My Play Choice for This Issue

*Zaragueta or Money Talks*, by Miguel Ramos Carrion and Vital Aza, and cleverly translated from the Spanish by Clarence Stratton. 7 men, 4 women—1 set—Price: \$.35. Published by Denison and Company of Chicago—No royalty.

This classic farce is in two acts but has been used as an evening's entertainment very successfully. Or one can use a clever curtain raiser with it. It is very colorful and easy for high school people to stage. I have had a student director stage it. It may be interesting to note that when it was produced in the drama department of Carnegie Institute of Technology, the juvenile leading man was none other than the now well-known Paramount Player, Robert Cummings. Its fast tempo is a real joy to actor and audience alike. I heartily recommend it.

## Christmas Assembly Play Suggestion

*The Traveling Man*, by Lady Gregory. 1 man, 1 woman, 1 boy (can be played by a high school student), interior, Irish or regular costumes. Price \$.50, royalty, \$.50.

Theme: Christ comes in disguise as a beggar and is uncharitably received by the mother but welcomed by the child. The mother is deeply sorrowed by her lack of knowledge as to the identity of Christ until it is too late. It is a beautiful dramatization of the idea of true giving.

## A Grading Method for Plays Produced by Student Directors

Directors may be interested in the grading method which I found very successful in the raising of standards of dramatic work. During the past six years I graded my student-directed productions on this scale:

1. Lines—25%. (For 1 prompt subtract 3 points; for 2 prompts, subtract 4 points; for 3 prompts, subtract 3 points; for 4 prompts, subtract 2 points. From then on I alternately subtracted 3 points and 2 points per prompt. Example: 3-2-3-2, etc. I considered a prompt noticeable help on stage and any help from off stage. In the case of noticeable help on stage, I felt it was not a prompt unless the audience was conscious of the aid. My reason for placing such a heavy penalty on lines was to teach the principle that nothing can be truly successful unless thoroughly prepared. As a result of this system there has been a clean slate for assembly student-directed plays in the six years in which this grading system was in effect. The number of plays produced during this period passes the 100 mark by a considerable degree. Prompts may be excusable and cannot always be helped but the lesson or goal is there and good acting comes only from lines learned so thoroughly that the actor can afford to think of characterization.)

2. Diction—20%. (Here I include good enunciation, projection, natural speech, correct diction for the type of character and play and pronunciation. I do not believe in an inconsistent affected speech.)

3. Action—15%. (This needs no explanation.)

4. Tempo—15%. (Rhythm and speed are essential to an interesting production. Speed in some degree is found in the most solemn tragedy. At times it must have a faster tempo for climax and color. All tempo and rhythm should retain the mood of the play.)

5. Business—10%. (I include any action the actor may have.)

6. Setting—10%. (Is the setting too dominant a note in the play? It should enhance the play. Is it in keeping and does it show balance and originality?)

7. Technical Efficiency—5%. (Does the director have off-stage effects timed correctly? Does the curtain pull in time and in correct rhythm with the play's mood? Do the lights work correctly? Etc.)

Note: I used this grading method in my intramural one-act play contests also.

## International Etiquette

A student of mine recently brought me the October tenth issue of the magazine, *Lutheran Young Folks*. In it is an excellent article on International Etiquette. I am going to quote a part of this article because it has a vital message for all students of speech and particularly of dramatics which is so concerned with the voice.

"The great disappointment to me in our modern universities is the lack of concrete training in courtesy. Take for instance the use of the English language, voice placing. This may sound trivial to a scientific mind, but some day it will be the giant that may slay that very scientist. A student comes from a town where his ears have been accustomed to ungrammatical language; he has heard people talk through their noses. This student is awkward but brilliant; he takes his B. A., his M. A., and finally leaves the university with his Ph. D. well earned; but he leaves speaking the same impoverished variety of nasal English with which he entered. When the day comes and it will may, that he is sent by his government on a diplomatic mission to some far country, he will then feel the awful necessity of having a speaking voice well placed; of knowing the best manners of his own country; and of being able to speak his own language with an accent that falls harmoniously upon the ears of his foreign hearers."

There is little probability that many will have opportunities to be diplomats for one's country but the principle applies to any serious profession or work. The point the author, Welthy Honsinger Fisher, wishes to make is the necessity for a real education to include a pleasing voice along with a courtesy that harmonizes with the voice.

## My Book Choice for This Issue

*Technique in Dramatic Art*, by Halliam Bosworth—Macmillan Company, New York—Textbook Edition—\$2.60.

This book has won its spurs for many years and continues to remain very popular as a text in play production. Its chapter on "Elementary Principles" is worth the price alone. The book will prove especially helpful to the beginning director.

HAVE your stage hands wear rubber soled shoes. Keep your actors off the stage until curtain call. Do not let heads, arms, hands and parts of costumes appear in doorways or windows.—Leslie Crump.

THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN



## HERE AND THERE

Shaw's play, *You Never Can Tell*, was the first major production of the present year at Pekin (Ill.) Community High School. The play was produced on October 23, under the direction of Mr. W. Kirtley Atkinson.

Mrs. E. Oscar Randolph, sponsor for Troupe No. 24 of Morgantown (N. C.) High School, is now associated with the North Carolina Dramatics Teachers Association this year. Dramatics has been placed on the accredited curriculum at Morganton High School.

Mr. T. C. Antwerp, former sponsor for Troupe No. 321 of Plant High School, Tampa, Florida, is now associated with the National Youth Administration for the state of Florida. Mr. Antwerp is sponsor for The Thespian Footlighters, an alumni troupe composed of Thespians from Troupes Nos. 321 and 147 of Tampa, Florida.

Thespians from Troupe No. 215 of Stambaugh (Mich.) High School entered the play, *A Message From Khufu*, in the Drama Festival held at Iron Mountain late last May. Other entries in this event were *Elmer*, entered by Iron River High School, and *Riders to the Sea*, presented by Iron Mountain High School. Goldsmith's classic, *She Stoops to Conquer*, was the first production of this year at Stambaugh. Miss Helen Dunham directed the production.

The popular play, *Guess Again*, opened the season for Garret Schenck, Jr., High School at East Millinocket, Maine. The double cast system was used for this production under the direction of Mr. Daniel Turner, troupe sponsor and Regional Director for the state of Maine. *Guess Again* was presented on October 22 and 23.

The entry of tragedies will be barred this year in the Texas Interscholastic League One-Act Play Contest. Plays will be limited to comedies and farces only.

Richard Smith, a member of Troupe No. 225 of Lincoln (Ill.) Community High School, was chosen last spring as a member of the All-State Cast for Illinois. Mr. Clarence A. Miller directs dramatics and Thespian activities at Lincoln Community High School.

"The Kathrine Cornell Troupe (No. 277) of The National Thespians" is the new name recently adopted by Thespians at Drumright (Okla.) High School. Miss La Don York, best Thespian for this troupe last year, is now attending Grace-land College in Iowa, where she recently served as assistant director for a production of *The Queen's Husband*.



THE SWEETMEAT GAME

Presented by, Thespians at Postville (Iowa) High School, under the direction of Miss Margaret L. Meyn. Stage set designed by students.

The season for Troupe No. 112 of Norfolk (Nebr.) Senior High School began with a production of the one-act play, *Love in the Mountains*, with which Thespians won first place in a local theatre contest. *The Bat* was presented on November 24 under the direction of Milton J. Wiksell, director of dramatics and Thespian activities.

### Among Our Directors

Miss Angela Craft has succeeded Miss Helen N. Johnston as sponsor for Troupe No. 55 at Beaver High School of Bluefield, West Virginia.

Thespian activities at Jenkintown (Pa.) High School are under the supervision of Miss Gratia Kendall this year. Miss Kendall has succeeded Miss Helen Fox.

Troupe No. 91 of Isaac C. Elston High School, Michigan City, Indiana, have a new sponsor in the person of Miss Emily Davidson who has succeeded Miss Goldie Shepherd.

Miss Leitha V. Perkins has assumed charge of Thespian activities at Washington Gardner High School of Albion, Michigan.

Troupe No. 75 of Union High School, Milwaukie, Oregon, is under the supervision of Miss Janet Cox who succeeded Miss Thelma Ryckman this year.

Miss Lucile Benz assumed charge of Troupe No. 103 at Neenah (Wis.) High School this fall.

Troupe No. 164 of Dunbar (Neb.) High School is now under the supervision of Mr. C. M. Strong.

### Avoid the Christmas Rush

Students and teachers who plan to order Thespian jewelry for presentation during the Christmas season are urged to place their orders at once. As many as ten or twelve days are required to fill an order. All orders must be sent to The National Thespians, Campus Station, Cincinnati, Ohio, for official approval.

Miss Florence M. Rees is now in charge of Thespian activities at Twin Falls (Idaho) High School. Miss Rees was formerly located at Great Falls, Montana.

Thespian activities will be in charge of Miss Verdene Vickers at Downey (Idaho) High School.

Miss Mildred Fore has replaced Mr. Robert Mitchner as sponsor for Troupe No. 255 at Cannelton (Ind.) High School.

Mr. W. Kirtley Atkinson has succeeded Miss E. Louise Falkin as Thespian Sponsor and director of dramatics at Pekin (Ill.) Community High School.

Miss Anna Virginia Rector is the new sponsor for Troupe No. 43 of Hundred (W. Va.) High School. She succeeds Mr. C. A. McClelland.

Thespian activities will be in charge of Miss Dorothy Stauffacher this year at Tomah (Wis.) High School. Miss Stauffacher replaces Miss Helen Taborsky.

The sponsorship of Troupe No. 294 at Postville (Iowa) High School will be in charge of Miss Olivette Holmes this year. Miss Holmes has the position formerly held by Miss Margaret L. Meyn who is now located at Wyoming (Ill.) High School.

Thespians of Troupe No. 288 of Salisbury (Mo.) High School have a new sponsor this year in the person of Miss Gretchen Hunker who has succeeded Miss Kathryn Rose Holiday.

Miss Maurine Morgan has taken the place formerly held by Mr. Earl W. Blank at Eveleth (Minn.) Senior High School.

Mrs. Lolo F. Eddy, former sponsor at Onarga (Ill.) Township High School, is now in charge of Troupe No. 14 at Harrisburg (Ill.) Township High School. Miss Mildred Stengl is now in charge of Troupe No. 274 at Onarga.

Miss Dorothy Burnett has replaced Mr. T. C. Van Antwerp as sponsor for Troupe No. 321 and director of dramatics at Plant High School, Tampa, Florida.

Miss Mary E. Bavee is in charge of dramatics and Thespian activities this year at Canton (N. Y.) High School. Miss Bavee has succeeded Miss Claire K. Gage.

Mr. Donald H. Horton has succeeded Mr. Alex Gruenberg as director and Thespian sponsor at Grosse Pointe (Mich.) High School. Mr. Horton will have charge of Troupe No. 49.



# On the College Stage

The purpose of this department is to furnish high school directors and students with news regarding the most significant events occurring in dramatics among colleges and universities. Articles appearing below are published through the courtesy of *Alpha Psi Omega*, a national dramatic honorary collegiate fraternity, and *Delta Psi Omega*, a national honorary drama society for Junior Colleges.

## Kent State University

Four major productions are scheduled for the present school year at Kent State University, Kent, Ohio. The season began with Jackson's play, *The Bishop Misbehaves*, a recent Broadway success. *Ah! Wilderness*, the comedy of recollection by O'Neill, is next on the production schedule. This will be followed later by *Streets of New York*. The Pulitzer Prize winner, *The Old Maid*, will close the season.

Among the one-act plays scheduled for the season are: *Where the Cross is Made* and *Dear Me*. An outstanding dramatic event of the year will be the second annual Northeastern Ohio One-Act Play Contest which the Drama Department sponsors in conjunction with the National Thespian Society. This contest has been tentatively scheduled for Friday and Saturday, April 2 and 3. Prof. E. Turner Stump is head of the Drama Department at Kent University. Prof. G. Harry Wright is Associate Director. \* \* \*

## Florence State Teachers College

The tentative production schedule for State Teachers College of Florence, Alabama, as announced by Miss Hazel L. Breland, director of dramatics, includes *Cradle Song*, *Berkeley Square*, and *Gammer Gurton's Needle*. In addition to writing some one-act plays, the following one-acts will be produced for the benefit of Freshmen students: *Submerged*, *The Val-*

*iant*, and *Winsome Winnie*. The Rehearsal Club of this school will present several plays over the radio station at Sheffield, and several members plan to attend some major dramatic productions at Nashville. The Rehearsal Club is composed of all students interested in dramatics. \* \* \*

## Wilmington College

*Dulcy*, *New Brooms*, and opera, and a Shakespearean production are the major productions for the year at Wilmington, Ohio, College. Under the direction of Miss Helen McCoy, director of dramatics, the following one-act plays will also be presented: *Common Clay*, *The Telegram*, *Little Scarface*, and *Sewing for the Heathen*. \* \* \*

## Peru State Teachers College

A major dramatic event of the fall season at Peru State Teachers College, Peru, Nebraska, was the production of *Post Road*, under the direction of Mr. D. J. Nabors, director of dramatics. This successful production was taken on a fall tour to neighboring communities. Other plays scheduled for presentation this year include the popular play of youth, *Remember the Day*, *The Servant in the House*, *Comedy of Errors*, *Kind Lady*, and *Cinderella*. An All-College Review will also be given during the year. On March 4 and 5, the annual M-I-N-K Debate Tournament will be held. The

M-I-N-K One-Act Play Festival will be held on March 19, 20, and the College Play Festival, on April 10. \* \* \*

## Bessie Tift College

*Ladies in Waiting* opened the dramatic season at Bessie Tift College of Forsyth, Georgia. In addition to several other major plays, the present season will include the annual one-act play tournament which will be held in January, the one-act play festival, and the spring tour which is also an annual occurrence at this college. Bi-monthly programs of poetry reading and character interpretation are also given under the supervision of Miss Edna West who directs dramatics. \* \* \*

## Los Angeles Junior College

The famous comedy, *The Warrior's Husband*, opened the eighth season and marked the 110th production for Los Angeles, California, Junior College. This play was presented during the entire week of September 28 in the College Little Theatre. Nadiene Dale directed, while Harold Turney was the managing director. Jerry Blunt was the supervising director. *The Doctor in Spite of Himself* was presented during the week of October 18. \* \* \*

## McKendree College

Charles Quimby Burdette's play, *New Fires*, was the first production of the present year for McKendree College of Lebanon, Illinois, under the direction of Miss Cora Marie Thomas. \* \* \*

## Wisconsin State Teachers College

Under the direction of Dr. Rudolph Charles Bednar, head of the Speech Department, Wisconsin State Teachers College at La Crosse will present a number of dramatic events during the present year. First on the production schedule is the play, *Three Cornered Moon*, which was chosen as the typical high school play to be produced by the classes in Speech for prospective high school teachers. *As I Love Salt*, a Czechoslovakian children's play, was chosen to be produced by the classes in Speech for prospective rural and elementary school teachers. *Romeo and Juliet* will be the outstanding play of the season and will be produced by Alpha Psi Omega. The Annual Varieties Show will also be presented.

Other dramatic activities at this college include the presentation of several one-act plays produced by the Freshmen Players under the direction of members of the Buskin Club and Alpha Psi Omega chapter. Miscellaneous programs presented by talent from the Speech and Music departments are given weekly over radio station WKBH. Several one-act plays are taken annually to neighboring villages and public institutions for the purpose of furnishing entertainment otherwise unavailable. Dr. Bednar has two community projects in mind. The first is that of having the local churches sponsor an annual production of *Everyman*. The



Scene from Kapek's play, *R. U. R.*  
A production of Glendale (California) Junior College.

second is to organize a troupe—The Town and Gown Players—of townspeople interested in the production of plays

### Linfield College

At least nine major productions will be presented this season under the direction of R. D. Mahaffey at Linfield College of McMinnville, Oregon. *Come Seven* opened the season on October 16. *Under the Gaslights* will be staged on December 4 and 5. On January 15, *Journey's End* will be produced, and *Cradle Song* will be staged the next day, January 16. Five additional productions are scheduled for the second semester. A total of nineteen one-act plays, all non-royalty plays, will also be staged during the present school semester.

Other events of a dramatic nature scheduled for the year include the Conservatory presentation of *Messiah*, the Christmas Carols Annual Concert under the direction of V. W. Elliott, the presentation of monthly radio programs under the direction of Mr. Mahaffey, the Vesper Players regular Sunday evening programs, and the Annual Intra-Mural Tournament. Courses in drama and dramatics at this college include Elementary Dramatics, Play Production, Theatre Work Shop, Play-writing, Modern Drama, Oral Interpretation, and Shakespeare.

### Hampden-Sydney College

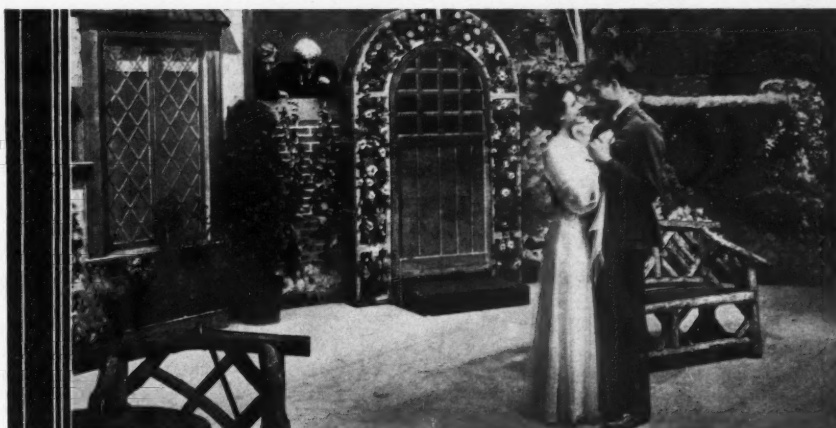
The Jongleurs, the second oldest dramatic club in the United States, is still active at Hampden-Sydney College, Virginia, under the direction of Dr. Walter Herman Bell. This college also has a chapter of Alpha Psi Omega National Honorary Dramatic Fraternity. The Jongleurs Club presented a one-act play for the entertainment of the Freshmen class on the tenth of October. Immediately after this, Alpha Psi Omega presented a play for new men exclusively. *Captain Applejack* will probably be repeated this year. *The Bishop's Candlesticks* is one of the one-act plays produced this season.

### Edinburg Junior College

Four radio broadcasts will constitute part of the dramatic season at Edinburg, (Texas) Junior College, under the supervision of Mrs. Ruth Owings, director of dramatics. One of these broadcasts will be the balcony scene from *Romeo and Juliet*, the latter being one of the major productions of the season. Although the production programs of one-act plays is not completed at this time of writing, the following plays are being presented: *When the Chimes Rang*, *The Bank Account*, and *In 1999*. A play Festival for the high schools of the Rio Grande Valley was sponsored in November. In March this college will enter the Texas Junior College One-Act Play Contest.

### University of Iowa

Among the productions given this past summer by the Department of Drama of



A scene from *SMILIN' THROUGH*  
Produced at Fullerton Junior College, Fullerton, Calif. Directed by Mrs. Ethel Litchfield.

the University of Iowa were: *As You Like It*, *Elizabeth the Queen*, and *Her Master's Voice*.

### El Dorado Junior College

The dramatic season for El Dorado Junior College of El Dorado, Arkansas, opened with a production of W. E. Jones' play, *Cocktails or Tea*. At least half a dozen one-act plays will also be produced during the present year. In March, an operetta of two or three acts will probably be given. Members of the Dramatic Club will also participate in the City pageant celebrating the state centennial. Plans are also under way to enter the state play contest. The Dramatic Club will broadcast once a month.

### Eastern State Normal School

*The Command Performance* opened the dramatic season at Eastern State Normal School of Madison, South Dakota, under the direction of Dr. Lena J. Myers. The schedule of major production for this season also includes the presentation of a fairy play for children, a commencement play, and an evening of one-act plays. A play tournament, the contestants to be chosen

from the elementary play directing class, and the directors to be members of the advanced play-directing class, will be held later in the season. The best plays entered in this tournament will constitute an evening's bill for public performance.

### San Bernardino Valley Jr. College

*He Who Gets Slapped* was successfully staged under the direction of Miss Tempe Allison at San Bernardino (Calif.) Valley Junior College, on November 20. In the spring this college will participate in the Pasadena Playhouse One-Act Play Tournament.

### Sacramento Junior College

Under the direction of John Lawrence Seymour and Frances Frater, the dramatic season opened at Sacramento, (Calif.) Junior College with a successful production of *Moor Born*, on October 21, 22. *The Ivory Door* will be presented on December 10, 11. Plans for the spring include the presentation of *The Miser* and possibly Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. Several one-act plays are also being prepared for presentation before local clubs.



**MACBETH**  
Staged in an Old Globe Theatre setting at Fairmont (W. Va.) State College. Directed by Prof. L. A. Wallman.



# ON THE HIGH SCHOOL STAGE

## Casts for Plays at Wichita High School North Selected From Dramatics Classes

In casting plays at Wichita High School North, Wichita, Kansas, the drama department is not privileged to select students from the entire student body, as is true in many other high schools. Instead, the casts are taken from students enrolled in the regular dramatics classes, thereby giving each student an opportunity to receive proper training previous to his first experience on the stage. This system has been responsible for many splendid productions during the past several years.

Under the supervision of Miss Evelyn Clark, speech and dramatics teacher and sponsor for Troupe No. 136, the following plays were presented last season: *Man or Mouse*, *The Marlenburg Necklace*, and the three-act comedy, *Cappy Ricks*.

An unusual feature of the play productions at this school is the fact that the fifteen hundred seats of the auditorium are all filled the night of a performance. Several students were admitted to Thespian membership during 1935-36.—DOROTHY PERRY, Secretary.

## Thespians Have Busy Year at Stambaugh, Michigan

The Stambaugh group of the National Thespians, Troupe 215, enjoyed a busy season this past year. Early in the fall work was started on the Mark Twain anniversary play, *Huckleberry Finn*. The rehearsals were drawn out over a long period as the presentation of the play was postponed twice: first because of a scarlet fever epidemic and secondly because the gym was being remodeled.

Later in the year the troupe presented two one-act plays and one two-act. These gave many understudies sufficient lines and experience to become Thespians.

In the spring the school entered the Drama Festival at Iron Mountain, giving *A Message from Khufu* with an all-boy cast. This is a very unusual mystery tale of an Egyptian mummy and its revenge on the desecrators of its tomb.

All through the year the troupe had regular meetings, make-up classes and occasionally a social meeting. Miss Helen Dunham has charge of dramatics and Thespian activities at Stambaugh High School.

## Thespians at Sanford, Florida, Stage *The King Rides By*

A major production of last season at Seminole High School, Sanford, Florida, was the presentation of the senior play, *The King Rides By*, which was a success both artistically and financially. All except two members of the cast were members of Thespian Troupe No. 130, sponsored by Mrs. May Belle Maxwell, director of dramatics. This play was the first given by Thespians after a complete re-organization of the troupe had been made early in the fall. *The Villain Still Pursued Her* was one of the one-act plays presented later in the season.

Early this fall several new members were added to the Troupe, and a program of several plays for the year was planned.—ROBERT WILSON, Secretary.

## Berlin (N. H.) Senior High School Has Busy Dramatic Season During 1935-36

Dramatic activities for 1935-36 at Berlin (N. H.) Senior High School began in October with the School Publication's play, *Grumpy*, directed by the faculty advisor of publications, Miss Mary F. Dresser. The cast for this play is always drawn from the three upper classes. It was unusually entertaining and a decided success.

Thanksgiving Eve arrived and with it the annual Senior play. *The Ninth Guest*, a mystery play by Oliver Davis, was presented to an audience of 1200 in the auditorium. *The Ninth Guest* is different from the ordinary run of mystery plays, and at no time in the play can the outcome be guessed. It was one of the most successful productions ever given in the city both dramatically and financially. Miss Margaret M. Fraser, National Thespian Director and Thespian Regional Director for New Hampshire, directed the play.

Thespians presented the Christmas assembly, a one-act play, *The Music Box* by Jack Stuart Knapp. This beautiful play was just the thing to put us in the Christmas spirit. It was presented during the holidays for the Woman's Club and Daughters of Isabella.

The entertaining operetta, *Oh Doctor*, was produced by the music department under the direction of Miss Shirley Cave and Mr. George Goldthwaite in February.

On February 14, the Thespians joined with the Mechanic Arts Club and celebrated Na-

tional Drama Week by presenting the very lively one-act play, *Deadline*. These two clubs also presented the St. Patrick's Entertainment on March 16 by giving several musical numbers and the one-act play, *Dress Rehearsal*. Both of these entertainments were directed by Miss Fraser.

The Annual Junior Recital took place on April 15. Several entertaining readings and the very thrilling one-act play, *The Other Side*, were given. This was under the direction of Miss Emma J. Williams.

All School Night with a variety program and a short three-act play, *The Man in the Shadows*, was celebrated on May 4. The play was directed by Miss Dresser.

The final dramatic production of the year was the Senior Assembly on June 5 under the direction of Miss Fraser. A Thespian banquet was held in May. Thirteen new members were added to the troupe in April, and important plans have been made for this year.

## Additional Activities Planned for this Year at Stadium High School, Tacoma, Washington

Under the able supervision of Miss Alberta F. Black, director of dramatics and sponsor for Troupe No. 150, several new activities will mark the dramatic season for this year. There is a new interest in dramatics among students, and additional classes in dramatics will be resumed.

During the past school year three public performances were presented. These were the Christmas play, *The Music Box*; the Lincoln Day play, *The Day Lincoln Died*, and the Senior Class play, *Berkeley Square*. The class play was unmistakably the most important function of the year. The plot concerns the happenings in an old English house inherited by Peter Standish in the present century. By some mysterious quirk of fate, Peter changes places with an ancestor of his, also a Peter Standish, who lived some 150 years before. His strangeness there and certain slips constantly being made, together with his failure to carry out the happenings that are recorded in the old diary since he falls in love with the sister of the girl the eighteenth century Peter Standish married, finally culminate in his return to the twentieth century, where he lives alone in reverent memory of his love which transcends all time and space. Th's play, judged by many as too difficult to stage, was most successfully given under the direction of Miss Alberta Frances Black.

At the regular dramatic club meetings nineteen plays were presented, besides the pantomimes and reports on the National Thespian Society's Magazine. The school's dramatic year was closed with the installation of the five new members into the National Thespian Society.—Lavaun McCall, Secretary.

## Auburn (Nebr.) Troupe Organized Early This Fall

Troupe No. 285 of The National Thespians was formally organized early this fall at Auburn (Nebr.) High School, under the sponsorship of Miss Faye E. Hubbert, director of dramatics.

During the past season students of this high school worked on several one-act plays, including *The Cranberry Sauce*, given for Thanksgiving; *Fiat Lux*, staged for Christmas, and several skits and stunts for club meetings, assemblies, etc. An unusual honor of the past season was the fact that a student of this school was awarded first place in the sub-district declamatory contest, first at the district, and superior rating at M-I-N-K contest held at Peru each year and which is attended by contestants from four states. Mr. James Lee Armstrong was the winning orator. He also played the lead in the junior class play, *New Fires*. Miss Faye E. Hubbert is a member of Alpha Psi Omega Honorary Collegiate Dramatic Fraternity. An active program of Thespian activities is being planned for the present school year.

## BEST THESPIANS



### Honor Roll



Thespians whose names are listed below have been awarded special recognition for their superior work, loyalty, promptness, and cooperation in the interest of high school dramatics. They have been selected as the most valuable Thespians of their troupes for the past school year.

- Miss Betty Morrissey, Troupe No. 55, Beaver High School, Bluefield, W. Va.
- Mr. Tom Watson, Troupe No. 321, H. B. Plant High School, Tampa, Florida.
- Mr. James Sturm, Troupe No. 226, Washington Irving High School, Clarksburg, W. Va.
- Mr. Bill Arnett, Troupe No. 226, Washington Irving High School, Clarksburg, W. Va.
- Mr. John Hudkins, Troupe No. 200, Charleston (W. Va.) High School.
- Miss Edith Langley, Troupe No. 213, Red Wing (Minn.) High School.
- Miss Nina Manker, Troupe No. 146, Pekin (Ill.) Community High School.
- Mr. Earl Hill, Troupe No. 215, Stambaugh (Mich.) High School.
- Mr. John Ward, Troupe No. 254, B. M. C. Durfee High School, Fall River, Mass.
- Mr. Edwin Beniske, Troupe No. 130, Seminole High School, Sanford, Florida.
- Miss Marie Smith, Troupe No. 235, Ellen-ville (N. Y.) High School.
- Mr. Jerome Cross, Troupe No. 235, Ellen-ville (N. Y.) High School.





### PEG O' MY HEART

Given as a Junior Class play at Bellefontaine (Ohio) High School. Directed by Miss Helen Reimund.

### On Board the Central Valley Show Boat at Greenacres, Wash.

Is that whistle from the "Queen Mary" as she majestically sets sail for Great Britain? No, my dears, that is the Thespian Show Boat tooting its own horn as it launches on another successful year. The 250th Troupe of the Central Valley High School, Greenacres, Washington, is winning wide acclaim at every port. With its faithful Captain, Billye Grove, President; First Mate, Vernon Bryant, Vice-President; Second Mate, Ruth Raymond, Secretary; Purser, James Egbert, Treasurer; and Pilot, Miss Lotta June Miller, director, the faithful craft is riding the low waters of the football season with flying colors.

In the true American spirit it rallied to the cause of patriotism by presenting a play honoring the earliest Show Boat Captain of this hemisphere, namely, good old Christopher Columbus. Fame resounded up and down the river banks with such gusto that the Old Show Boat set anchor at a friendly radio station where the performance was repeated.

To localize their patriotism, First Mate Bryon and Second Mate Raymond rallied to the cause of the Pigskin and presented advertising skits up and down the Valley (the Spokane Valley), to encourage patrons to attend the big game. Their efforts stimulated much merriment and money for the dear old ship yard, alias the high school.

Realizing that all good crafts require a large and stalwart crew, four deck hands were annexed: Mary Filer, Joan Batey, June Pettibone, and Gene Patterson. Being unusually capable, their scrubbing days were soon over, making them full-fledged Show Boat Entertainers.

Ship ahoy! Ship ahoy! Oh, no, that is not a distress signal from the Thespian Show Boat. That is merely the Queen Mary calling for an entertainment of true Thespian caliber.

### The Patchwork Quilt Staged as Senior Class Play at Madison (S. D.) High School

A patchwork of memories, sewn together by emotions that plumbed the depths of every human experience, wrote their history in *The Patchwork Quilt*, produced on May 18 as the senior class play at Madison, South Dakota, High School, under the direction of Miss Mabel Phelps. This was an unusually ambitious production for a high school group, but a finished performance was given. Among those who had leading roles in the play were: Eldred Breedlove, Bob Aus, Ruth Schnack, Doris Kasch, and Jean Hutchinson.

Among the other plays staged last year at Madison High School were the operetta, *Tune In*, and Booth Tarkington's popular four-act play, *Clarence*. As a result of these productions fourteen students became eligible for

Thespian membership and were admitted early in the spring.

### Eddystone (Pa.) Thespians Plan Annual Play Contest

Among the various dramatic activities planned for this year at Eddystone (Pa.) High School, under the direction of Miss F. G. Dolbow, is the second annual one-act play contest. In January of last year Thespians sponsored their first one-act play contest at this school. The seniors gave the play, *Luncheon for Six*; the juniors, *Sauce for the Gosslings*, and the sophomores, *Two's Company*. The seniors were awarded first place in this event. A member of the sophomore class was selected as the best actor.

The Lighthouse Players, Troupe No. 307, opened last year's season with a presentation of *The Ghost Hunters* to celebrate Hallowe'en. The cast consisted of the veteran players and turned out to be a "screaming" success. The sophomores entertained next with a short play for Thanksgiving called *It Could Have Been Worse*. The juniors followed with a Christmas play, *The Tree*.

The first three-act play of the season was *Heart Trouble*. The cast did credit to the Thespians because praise was received everywhere. An operetta, *Oh, Doctor*, was also produced with Thespians in the leading characters. The season closed with the production of *Thursday Evening*, presented by an all-star Thespian group on class night. This play proved to be a well deserved success and was a fitting conclusion to the dramatic year.

### Liberty Memorial High School at Lawrence, Kansas, Has Large Increase in Dramatics Enrollment

The enthusiasm for dramatics in Liberty Memorial High School has caused the enrollment to increase from sixty-five to one hundred fifteen students this past year, which necessitated the formation of two additional clubs.

*The Goose Hangs High*, directed by Miss Elizabeth Shepherd, dramatics director and sponsor for Troupe No. 157, was the first play presented. Five Thespians took part in the play, namely: Jean Perry, Mildred Ewing, Frank Gurtler, Warren McCall, and Ralph Allen. Sarilou Smart, Isabel West, Bill Collins, and Rae Riggs were elected into the Thespians after their performances in the play.

The libretto for the operetta, *The Count and the Co-ed*, was also directed by Miss Elizabeth Shepherd. *The Hidden Guest* was given by the Junior Class, under the direction of Miss Luella Foreman. From this performance a number of new members were gained. At Christmas time, a one-act play, *Fiat Lux*, was

## The Frederick B. Ingram—Thespian

### PLAYWRITING CONTEST

Here is your chance to find out whether you can write what the public wants. For the best one-act play submitted, in the opinion of the judges, by a member of The National Thespian Society between the ages of sixteen and twenty-two, Frederick B. Ingram Publications offer the following award:

1. A complete library set of 1 copy of each of Ingram's Printed Plays.
2. Publication of the winning manuscript, all expenses to be borne by Frederick B. Ingram Publications, the author to receive twenty-five per cent of all royalties received from its presentation.

### Requirements

All entries must comply with the following requirements:

1. Manuscripts must be typewritten, double spaced, on only one side of the paper, with pages numbered.
2. Each contestant is limited to one manuscript.
3. The play must be in one act, the playing time being between twenty and thirty minutes.
4. Evidence of Thespian membership together with the age of the contestant must be submitted with each manuscript in the form of a letter from the Troupe sponsor.
5. The editorial staff of Frederick B. Ingram Publications shall act as judges and their opinion shall be final.
6. No rejected manuscript will be returned unless accompanied by a stamped self-addressed envelope.
7. All rights to the winning play are to be assigned and will be the property of Frederick B. Ingram Publications who are making this award.
8. Address all entries to Frederick B. Ingram Publications, Gansert Bldg., Rock Island, Illinois.

Contest closes June 1, 1937

presented. This was the first play ever given in our school in which only Thespians participated.

In addition, approximately fourteen one-act plays were presented at club meetings, a few of which were: *Three Potatoes for Mary*, *Weiners on Wednesday*, *Not Quite Such a Goose*, and *Aunt Jennie and the Quarterback*.

Lawrence high school entered the Eastern Kansas Forensic League contest and placed first in competition with Topeka and Emporia. The one-act play, *The Hundredth Trick*, was highly commended by the judge. On April 18 the State Forensic Contest was held in Emporia. In this, Aaron Cohen placed first in extemporaneous speaking and Thelma Oyler, third in dramatic operation.

Another high spot of the dramatic year was a radio broadcast over KFKU. Thespians hope to continue this work this year as students find broadcasting quite profitable training as well as enjoyable work.

*Mignonette*, a beautiful costume play, was chosen for the Senior Class play. It was a sweet and charming play, enjoyed by all who attended.

One initiation for new Thespians was held in the first semester and another one in the second semester. The club consists of about twenty-five members.

This past year has been a most successful one for Thespians and all interested in dramatics in the school. Not only have the plays been well attended by appreciative audiences, but the students feel that they have been rewarded for their work.—JEAN PERRY, Secretary.



### SMILIN' THROUGH

Staged by the dramatics students of Washington-Gardner High School, Albion, Mich. Directed by Miss Elaine Abbott.

## New Interest in Dramatics Developed at H. B. Plant High School, Tampa, Florida, During Past Season

In September of 1935 Mr. T. C. Van Antwerp, an English instructor with an interesting career of stage experiences to his credit, was appointed dramatic instructor at H. B. Plant High School at Tampa, Fla. It was announced on the school curriculum bulletin that dramatics was being offered as a full credit elective course. The result was that the registrar's office was flooded with applicants.

Immediately after the school's dramatic organizations were established, members of the new club were principally interested in stage management and stage-craft, began the tremendous task of cleaning out every nook and scrubbing every board on walls and floors of the stage. At the end of a week the stage was presentable and neat enough for rehearsals to begin.

Next in line was the checking of every piece of scenery and property, and patching and repainting it, which required another week's labor.

In the meantime the acting members were being cast in two one-act plays, *The Obstinate Family* and *It Will Be All Right On the Night*. *The Obstinate Family* was presented in assembly after four weeks of rehearsals.

Two weeks later, the senior class play was selected and rehearsals began. All other plays were dropped because of the determination to produce the best play ever given by a senior class at Plant.

When the curtain rose on the first act of *Gay*, the audience gasped when they saw a complete new set of scenery eloquently appointed to the last touch. Not a single appointment in scenery, lighting, sound effects or acting had been overlooked. The play was more successful in appearance and from a financial point than any other play yet produced at Plant.

Following the production of *Gay*, the director changed the name of the club to "The Plant Play Makers," and applications for membership into The National Thespians was filed.

The February graduating class left as their gift to the school the necessary amount of money for building a ceiling flat. During the Christmas holidays the stage-crafters began building the flat and repainting the scenery for the production of *So We'll Just Pretend* which was to be presented on the night of January 17th.

Never before in the history of Plant had a play been produced with such elaborate scenery as was *So We'll Just Pretend*. The ceiling flat, which is the only one in the city of Tampa, was used. A practical five branch chandelier was illuminated, and two sets of wall brackets were practically installed. Four indirect floor lamps completed the electrical appointments. Beautiful furniture was secured from one of the furniture stores. In place of using books, athletic trophies filled the bookcases. The trophies made a very appropriate

substitute for books in the guest room of a college memorial hall.

The applause on the setting was remarkable and immediately following the performance the director of the Tampa Little Theatre and the director of dramatics at Hillsborough High School came back stage and highly complimented the production. The stage was designed and built in its entirety by members of "The Play Makers" and by far the majority of the play direction was done by Bob Marbourg, student director.

On the night of January 17th the first troupe of National Thespians was installed. Eleven members were admitted and received the installation ritual. This was the first troupe in Tampa, and the third in the state of Florida. It was indirectly from Plant's becoming a member of the National Thespians that Hillsborough High of this city a few weeks later also became a member. Troupes 321 and 147 are working "side by side" and are rapidly accomplishing things which in another year should put Tampa high schools in the upper bracket of the long list of schools that are doing a great deal to promote a finer conception of dramatics through the influence of the National Thespian Dramatic Honor Society.

The Plant Play Makers were invited to produce one-act plays for the Tampa Little Theatre and the first production met with such success that it was repeated five times for other civic organizations. Several members of the Play Makers were invited to take part in plays given by the Little Theatre, the Friday Morning Musical and the Junior League.

## Social and Dramatic Activities Make Up Thespian Year at B. M. C. Durfee High School

During 1935-36 Troupe No. 254 of B. M. C. Durfee High School, Fall River, Mass., met every other week in the afternoons under the direction of Barbara Wellington. The Durfee Dramatic Club met every week directly after school. Because the club programs include the presentation of plays, Thespian activities have been more social. However, Thespians were privileged to hear several very good talks on the theatre from prominent men and women.

There were three initiations during the year, for which Thespians used the long ceremony and wore choir robes and masks. These were held on the stage with the curtains drawn and lighted by candles. Refreshments were served later in the school cafeteria. Thespian membership totaled 24 this year.

Thespian social activities included a mystery ride or treasure hunt, a roller skating party, Halloween dance, alumni banquet, scavenger hunt, beach picnic, Christmas and Valentine parties.

The public performances Thespians gave were the annual three short plays, which were scenes from Dickens' *Christmas Carol*, *Cradle Song* and *Romance is a Racket*. The biggest production was the Gilbert and Sullivan opera, *The Gondoliers*, with a cast of over 50 and the school orchestra. In place of the annual vaude-

ville called Novelty Nite, the club decided to hold an amateur night open to the whole school. This was the most financially successful performance of the year. The big play was *The Royal Family*, which brought in our last group of Thespians.

The most exciting affair was when Thespians won with *Cradle Song*, Act I, the Massachusetts Drama Day, and together with Cambridge, travelled up to Manchester, N. H., for the New England contest. We did not place at the latter but had three splendid days enjoying the twelve plays produced and meeting many actors.

Some of the short plays given for the club at meetings were *Thank You, Doctor*, *Grace Moore, Wanted*, written by a Thespian girl, *The Conflict*, *Benjamin Franklin*, *Washington's First Defeat* and *My Lady's Lace*.

Thespians also visited several other high schools, enjoying their productions, and invited two to give programs at Fall River. The club had theatre parties to Providence and Boston.

## The Late Christopher Bean Staged at Red Wing (Minn.) High School

Under the supervision of Miss Esther Hoyer, director of dramatics and sponsor for Troupe No. 213, three major plays were produced this past season at Red Wing (Minn.) High School. The first production of last year was the all-class play, *Digging Up the Dirt*. Later the junior class staged *The Haunted House* and the seniors gave the well known play, *The Late Christopher Bean*. A program of plays, including *The Dowry of Columbine* and *The Clown of Doodle Doo*, was presented for the benefit of children. Several plays are scheduled for production this season.

## Several Student-Directed Plays Staged at Lewiston (Idaho) Senior High School

A dramatic feature of the past year at Lewiston (Idaho) Senior High School was the successful presentation of several student-directed one-act plays. Among these one-act plays were: *Pink and Patches*, *The Rehearsal*, *Handsome Is, Sham* and *A Dollar* which was given an outdoor setting and proved a hilarious success. *Evening Dress Indispensable* showed the greatest skill in acting and directing, and the students in charge were asked to repeat the performance. An original play, *The Witch's Daughter*, written and directed by a student, Shirley Greer, was also an interesting feature of the year's program.

The two class plays for the year were *Tilly of Bloomsbury* and *Grumpy*. The Dramatic Club gave two one-act plays: *The Idlings of the King* and *The Valiant*, and in the spring presented the play, *The Royal Family*. Lewiston Senior High School has enjoyed an excellent dramatic program for the past several years under the direction of Miss Meta Pfeiffer, who is also sponsor for Troupe No. 76. An interesting and worth while dramatic program has been planned for this year.



## Here Comes Charlie, Major Production of Last Year at New Kensington (Pa.) High School

Action, and much of it, made the production of *Here Comes Charlie* one of the liveliest plays ever presented by the drama department of New Kensington (Pa.) High School. The play, directed by Miss Ada Fiscus, director of dramatics and sponsor for Troupe No. 14 of The National Thespians, was given on the night of February 25 in the Main Street Auditorium by the Ken-High National Thespians. The production was the subject of many favorable comments from the local press.

Florence Cooke played the part of Nora Malone with much skill. The part of Mrs. Farnham was competently acted by Regina Shipman, while Betty Beggs played the role of Charlie Hopps, and Robert McVey, the part of Larry. Others who gave excellent performances were Audrey Horton, Molly Van Ameringen, Walter Shearer, Howard Alter, Billy Linn and James Boyd.

*Say It With Taffy*, a one-act play, was staged during the Dramatic Club Meeting on Tuesday, March 31. This meeting was also much enlivened by a reading by O. Henry with a surprise ending in typical O. Henry style, by Eleanor Flick. Anna Lou Stevenson and Ruth Haaren gave a skit entitled *One Girl to Another*, while O'Feish and Hart, popular school playwrights, gave another of their mighty "drammers" called *The Great Impersonation*.

Fred Jackson's play, *A Full House*, was given in May as the senior class play. The cast was selected from among two hundred try-outs. Several Thespians had leading roles in this production.

## STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.

OF THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN, published bi-monthly (five times during school year), at Cincinnati, Ohio, for October 1, 1936.

State of Ohio  
County of Hamilton } ss.

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Ernest Bavely, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Editor of THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc. of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in Section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are:

Publisher—The National Thespian Honor Dramatic Society for High Schools, Campus Station, Cincinnati, O.  
Editor—Ernest Bavely, Campus Station, Cincinnati, O.  
Managing Editor—None.

Business Manager—Ernest Bavely, Campus Station, Cincinnati, O.

2. That the owner is: The National Thespian Honor Dramatic Society for High Schools, Campus Station, Cincinnati, O.; National Director, Earl W. Blank, California (Pa.) State Teachers College; Assistant National Director, Lotta June Miller, Central Valley High School, Greenacres, Wash.; Secretary-Treasurer, Ernest Bavely, Campus Station, Cincinnati; National Field Representative, Paul F. Opp, Fairmont (W. Va.) State College.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities are—None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; and also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

ERNEST BAVELEY,  
(Signature of Editor)

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 22nd day of September, 1936.

CARL C. GASDORF,  
Notary Public.

(SEAL)

(My commission expires November 11, 1938.)

## High Standards Required for Thespian Membership at Culpeper (Va.) High School

Membership in Troupe No. 303 of Culpeper, Virginia, High School is necessarily limited because the requirements are high and hard to fulfill. In order to qualify for membership, a student must meet all the requirements specified in the Society's national constitution, as well as the requirements specified by the troupe sponsor, Miss Mary McNeil, who also has charge of dramatic activities.

During the past year, Thespians were required to read several of the best plays of 1934-35, in addition to active participation in dramatic work in the school. Thespians worked with the dramatic club in carrying out several projects: observation of Drama Week; presentation of several one-act plays; studied make-up, collected a permanent costume wardrobe; and discussed such leading figures in the drama world as Eugene O'Neill and Helen Hayes.

## Three Major Plays Produced Last Season at La Junta (Colo.) High School

Under the supervision of Aria D. Hunter, three major plays were staged last year by the students of La Junta (Colo.) High School. The first of the year was the three-act farce, *Dollars to Doughnuts*, given on November 22. The English comedy, *The Farmer's Wife*, was staged by the Teachers' Club of La Junta High School, on March 26. The seniors closed their high school days with a presentation of the farce, *Tons of Money*, which was staged on April 24.

## I'll Leave It To You Staged by Morgantown (W. Va.) Thespians

Noel Coward's play, *I'll Leave It To You*, was produced on March 20, by Thespians from Troupe No. 27 of Morgantown, West Virginia, High School. The play was under the direction of Miss Dorothy Stone White, director of dramatics and Thespian Troupe Sponsor.

The cast included Flora Menefee, Jack Shepherd, Jane Hill, Jane Price, Clark Hopkins, Jean Louise Callahan, Robert Mathews, Helen Louise Dent, Barbara Froome, and Charles Leonard. Miss White had Adrian Hardman as Stage Manager. A number of students assisted as scenic artists, electricians, stage carpenters, properties, and make-up.

Thespians from this high school entered Paul Green's play, *The Last of the Lowries*, in the Sixth Annual one-Act Play Contest for West Virginia High School which is sponsored by the National Thespians. The cast of players were: Cumba, played by Jane Price; Jane, Helen Louise Dent; Mayno, Flora Menefree, and Henry Berry Lowrie, Harold Craze. Robert Summers, Claude Harner, and Jack Shepherd produced the sound effects. Robert Matthews served as stage manager.

## 1935-36 Year of Vigorous Activities at Anaconda (Mont.) High School

As always, the Dramatics department of Anaconda (Mont.) high school had a year of vigorous activity during 1935-36. One innovation of the department was the Drama Club, an organization open to any senior high school student for the purpose of schooling ambitious beginners for the local Thespian club. Participation in one production qualified the performers for Thespian. In this way the membership changed, and the club remained open as long as there were inexperienced newcomers to work with. Their three plays of the year were *Op O' My Thumb*, *On the Lot* and *Minnie Field*.

The next youngest organization made up of Freshmen—the Troupers—produced *Alice's Blue Gown*, *Love Is Like That*, and *Joint Owners in Spain*. The boys served as stage crew for the Thespian one-acts and rehearsed *A Night at an Inn*. Thespians and National Thespians began their year with an operetta, *College Daze*, an evening of one-act plays which included *The Robbery*, *The Neighbors*, and *The Man Without a Head*. *The Wedding* was given for the annual Thespian assembly, along with a musical interlude. Four Thespians took parts in the Senior play, *Big-Hearted Herbert*, and three of them presented *Mr. Sampson*, for the Little Theatre tournament.

During the year National Thespians admitted nine members at two impressive initiations conducted in the auditorium. One further high spot was a visit to the Deer Lodge troupe initiation on April 18.

Thespians are looking forward to the production of *Remember the Day*, and an active year for the four dramatic clubs this fall. Until this year, Miss Evelyn Clinton had charge of Thespian and dramatic activities at Anaconda.

## Students Present Popular Play at Red Bluff, California

*Growing Pains*, a very popular play among high schools during the past two or three seasons, was one of the major productions of the year at Red Bluff, California, Union High School. Miss Virginia Pearson, sponsor for Troupe No. 145, directed this successful production.

In recognition of Public Schools Week, *The New Fur Coat* was presented by the Thespians for the seventh time during the second semester. Other skits given during the year included: *Dog Tricks*, *The Bride in a Grocery Store*, *Spark Plugs*, *Art is a Wonderful Thing*, and *A Tragedy in Rhyme*.

To obtain the necessary Thespians initiation fee, several skits were given during the noon hour for which a small admission fee was charged. The following students became Thespians because of their efforts in dramatics and resourcefulness in earning their membership fees: Arla Gridley, Pauline Freemyers, Virginia Danielson, Alice and Ethel Pedersen, Jack McWilliams, Harold Williams, Clayton Hill and Keith Weitz.



THE HIDDEN GUEST

Directed by Miss Luella Foreman at Liberty Memorial High School, Lawrence, Kansas.

# PLAYS and READINGS

## THREE ACT PLAYS

**Angel Unawares**—by Felicia Metcalfe

A popular new light comedy mystery by the author of the Broadway success "Comes Easy."

**Black Cat**—by Robert St. Clair.

"The play was a success. People enjoyed it as it was so out of the ordinary. A clean, entertaining, and pleasing play." Miss Daisy Robins, Savannah, Mo.

**Bear Deception**—by Margaret Waite

Hilarious situations when Mrs. Flumm and her arrogant guests have to change places with the servants. New. Non-royalty.

**Remember You're a Lady**—by Wilbur Braun

"One of the funniest plays we have ever had." Supt. Madden, Woodward, Iowa.

**Romantic By Request**—by Ahlene Fitch

"It is a fine play. The dialogue is so clever." Miss Wilma Raynor, Kanawha, Iowa.

**Maybe It's a Murder**—by Josephine Bacon

"It is a fine play, and easily produced. It was enjoyed by everyone—said it was the best play ever given here." O. E. Lester, Van Meter, Iowa.

## CONTEST PLAYS

(Every one a winner)

Bread Upon the Waters  
Pink Girl  
Flight of the Herons  
Way Station  
The Red Dress  
They Cannot Return

## MAKE UP

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## Three Cornered Moon Major Event for Clayton (Mo.) High School

The major production for Clayton High School, Missouri, this past season was the successful presentation of Gertrude Tonkonogy's play, *Three Cornered Moon*. New scenery was constructed for this play, including a ceiling and steps and two large columns which divided the stage into two rooms.

Other plays for the year were: *It Pays To Be A Pogue*, *The Wonder Hat*, *Apostrophe In Modern Times*, and *The Hypnotist*. The latter was written and directed by Mr. Blanford Jennings, director of dramatics and Thespian sponsor, and was entered in a one-act play contest sponsored by Washington University of St. Louis, Missouri.

Thespian Troupe No. 322 was organized at this school during the month of March. The guest speaker at the installation ceremony was the president of Troupe No. 191 of Webster Groves, Missouri. A social event given by the Dramatic Guild in honor of the Thespian club was held in May.

JULES SCHWEIG, Secretary.

## Contests Stressed by Players at Gurnee, Illinois

An activity which receives much emphasis at Warren Township High School, Gurnee, Illinois, is that of participation in contests which are held within the ranks of the Dramatic Club. Stress is placed upon the value of public speaking contests with entries in verse reading, humorous and serious declamations, and extemporaneous speaking. Mrs. Wilma Horrell Grimes has charge of dramatics and Thespian activities.

Under the sponsorship of Troupe No. 241, a number of one-act plays were produced this past year. The program also included the production of two major plays. In the fall, the Junior Class presented the popular play, *Growing Pains*. In April, the Senior Class gave the play, *New Fires*. Both of these major productions were successful, due largely to the carefully planned stage settings. *Peace I Give Unto You* is recommended by this Troupe as an excellent non-royalty Christmas play.

## Thespian Troupe Organized at Flemington, West Virginia

An impressive installation held on May 10 of last spring under the direction of Mr. Edward Thomas, director of dramatics, marked the installation of Troupe No. 19 of The National Thespians at Flemington (West Virginia) High School. The following students comprised the charter roll: Jessie Silver, Ruth Burton, Anna Morgan, Helen Swecker, Tony Olivito and Charles Kelley. At a later meeting, Ruth Burton was elected Troupe president; Tony Olivito, vice-president; Jessie Silver, secretary, and Anna Morgan, treasurer.

During the 1935-36 season, the Dramatic Club, from which the Thespian troupe members are chosen, enjoyed a very busy season. Among the plays produced were: *The Gay Deception*, *Here Comes Charlie* and an operetta, *Jerry of Jericho Road*. A one-act play contest was also sponsored by the club.

The present season opened with much interest. Ten students were admitted to Thespian membership early in October. *The Ghost Train* opened the dramatic activities for the year. Productions to follow include *Growing Pains*, a one-act play contest, and a musical comedy presented in conjunction with the music clubs. The year will end with a formal dinner, a Thespian initiation, and a theatre party.—Jessie Silver, secretary.

## Thespian From Olney (Ill.) High School Awarded First Place

Miss Dorothy Jean Wilson, president of Troupe No. 292 of Olney (Ill.) Township High School, was the successful winner of a State College contest by giving the play, *Ashes of Roses*. For this honor she was given a college scholarship. Miss Wilson also won third place with an oration in the same contest.

Miss Beulah Hutchens has charge of dramatics and Thespian activities at this high school. One of the special dramatic events of the past season was the presentation of five one-act plays on the evening of February 14. By means of careful arrangements of scenes, it was possible to prepare the stage for each play in two minutes time. This speed should be achieved by other schools, for too often do prolonged intermissions disturb the audience. The five plays presented were: *Brink of Silence*, *Bread of Tears*, *For Distinguished Service*, *Caravan*, and *Shutting of Door*. The last-mentioned play was repeated later for the Eastern Star Lodge, and was the favorite of the high school.

## Madelon Taylor First in Contest at Watseka, Ill.

Miss Madelon Taylor, president of Troupe No. 278 of Onarga (Ill.) Township High School, was awarded the honor of having given the best performance in the Illinois State Sub-District Contest for Iroquois County on March 13. *The Lord's Payer*, given by Mrs. Lolo Eddy, troupe sponsor and director of dramatics, with an all-Thespian cast, was one of the three schools chosen to enter the district contest which was held at Bloomington on March 27.

The other two schools which were also chosen were: Watseka High School with the play, *Copy*, and Milford High School, with the play, *King Sargon's Jars*. The two other entries in this event were Gilman High School, with the play *The Sisters Tragedy*, and Cissna Park High School, with the entry, *The Shadow of the Mine*.

THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN





Scene from *TILLY OF BLOOMSBURY*, given by the Junior Class at Lewiston (Idaho) High School. Directed by Miss Meta Pfeiffer.

### Radio Plays Presented by Students at Michigan City (Ind.) High School

One of the unusual activities of the past year for the dramatic students of Isaac C. Elston High School of Michigan City, Indiana, was the presentation of several one-act plays over the radio station WIND, of Gary, Indiana. The plays were presented by the Radio Guild, consisting of both Thespians and members from the school's regular dramatic club, The Blackfriars.

During the past year, the Thespian club met with the Blackfriars every two weeks under the sponsorship of Miss Emily Davidson. The programs planned for these meetings consisted of tryouts for membership, talks on different phases of dramatics, and dramatic readings by guest speakers. The Thespian group sponsored the Christmas play, *Why The Chimes Rang*, staged as an assembly program. Joel Dilworth, a Thespian, had charge of a play given at the Mother and Son Banquet.

The season closed with a picnic which was attended by members of all the dramatic organizations in school. Troupe No. 91 has been under the supervision of Miss Goldie Shepherd, but this fall Miss Shepherd turned the club over to Miss Davidson.

### Trips to Broadway Playhouses Enjoyed by Students of Rye (N. Y.) High School

A special feature of the dramatic season at The Rye High School of Rye, New York, are the trips made by the dramatic students to New York City for the purpose of seeing up-to-the-minute Broadway hits. These trips are planned in advance under the supervision of Mr. Don T. Brennan, director of dramatics and sponsor for Troupe No. 222.

This past season the following plays were given at this high school: *The Three Corners*, *Moon*, *The Ghost Story*, *Submerged*, *The Valiant*, *The Cradle Song* and *The Perfect Tribute*. Seventeen students were admitted to Thespian membership on June 10.

### Thespians at War, West Virginia, Provides Funds for School Purposes

The year 1935-36 proved to be a happy one for Troupe No. 260 of Big Creek High School, War, West Virginia. Due to funds made available by Thespian activities, the troupe completed the payment on a piano, donated a large sum to the library, and made some necessary improvements on the stage scenery. In addition to the sum cleared from the Thespian play, an outstanding increase in the troupe treasury was made possible by the sale of candy, peanuts, and Christmas cards.

In the way of dramatic presentations the season opened with the Thespian production of the three-act play, *The Mill of the Gods*.

As a result of this play, several students were admitted to Thespian membership. This play was under the direction of Miss Floy Gamble, director of dramatics and Thespian sponsor. Later in the year, the junior class presented the play, *Laugh Clown*, which was directed by Miss Helen Louise Salkco and Bea Houghton. The senior class play was, *Winning Schemers*, directed by Miss Gamble.

Besides taking part in the school plays, some of the troupe members were also active in the State Literary Contest and in the Inter-Society Contest.—VELMA PRICE, Secretary.

### After Wimpole Street, Presented by Troupe at Etowah (Tenn.) High School

The popular high school play, *After Wimpole Street*, was one of the major successes of last season for Troupe No. 82 of Etowah (Tenn.) High School. This comedy was under the direction of Miss Rita Berrong who early in the season made a complete reorganization of the Thespian activities in her school. Another comedy in three acts given later in the year was *Eyes of Love*.

The following statement is indicative of the regard in which Thespian activities are held here: "We truly like our work as a Troupe of the National Thespians. We want to express our appreciation for the interest you have taken in us and we hope that we have upheld the standards of The National Thespians."

### Juniors Present *The Youngest* at Glenbard High School, Glen Ellyn, Ill.

The staging of the play, *The Youngest*, by the junior class of Glenbard High School this past spring, was something in the way of an experiment in that the stage crew was under the direction of a senior boy, Jack Furner, and not as usual under the direction of Mr. Arnie Ryan, a graduate of Glenbard. The stage crew, under Jack Furner, did an excellent job in staging the play, and much credit was given them for their initiative and skill which served to make the "experiment" a success.

The play itself was well-handled by the junior class cast, and the fact that few of them had had little experience on the stage did not hinder their performance. The costuming was a simple matter, as the play takes place in the present time; however, in some parts of the play quick changes had to be effected.

The production of this play meant the addition of ten new names to the roster of National Thespians and Elizabeth Rowe, Willis Bremener, Eleanor Henning, Bill Reynolds, Bud Manning, Priscilla McCormick, Chuck Pulse, Pat Pfau, Dick Courtice, Myron Hill were initiated at the annual party which ended another successful year for Troupe 233.—ANNETTE TEMPLE, Sec'y-Treas.

### Thespians at Charleston (W. Va.) Stage Several Major Plays During Past Season

Four three-act plays were produced last winter by Mr. Lawrence W. Smith at Charleston (W. Va.) High School. Mr. Smith has charge of dramatics and Thespian activities and has coached winning plays for several years in the West Virginia State One-Act Play Contest (Continued on page 29)

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THE BOOMER  
By Howard Reed. 6M, 6W.

PAY AS YOU ENTER  
By Charles George. 7M, 7W.

COME SEVEN  
By Octavius Roy Cohen. 7M, 6W.

THE BUSYBODY  
By Dorrance Davis. 8M, 8W.

THE INNER CIRCLE  
By Marion Harvey. 8M, 4W.

THE RADIO MYSTERY  
By Rush and Hagan. 12M, 7W.

BEVERLY'S BALANCE  
By Paul Kester. 5M, 5W.

MY IRISH CINDERELLA  
By Spooner and Blaney. 5M, 4W.

WATCH YOUR STEP  
By Savage and Peltret. 5M, 4W.

GO AHEAD  
By N. E. Reid. 4M, 5W.

TAMING OF THE SHREW  
By William Shakespeare. 14M, 12W.

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The Playhouse, Youngstown College,  
Cleveland, O. Youngstown, Ohio.

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# Guide to Play Selection

## Christmas Plays

The following list of one-acts has been compiled for the convenience of those who plan to produce plays appropriate for the Christmas season. All questions regarding these plays should be addressed to the publishers.

**EDNA MEANS DRAMATIC SERVICE,**  
525 Arlington Place, Chicago, Illinois

	Royalty	Actors		
		M.	W.	C.
When the Lining is Silver.....	None	0	3	0
By Lucile Crites				
The Birthday of a King.....	None	15		
By Constance W. Camp				
Grandma's Christmas Escapade.....	None	4	8	0
By Marie Irish				
Why the Chimes Rang.....	\$ 5.00	6	4	0
By Elizabeth McFadden				
Reverie.....	10.00	4	3	8
By Percival Wilde				
Bethlehem.....	None	Children		
By Ruth Bryan Owen				
The Wandering Child.....	None	2	1	3
By Mary Richmond Davidson				
The Killer.....	5.00	3	1	0
By Albert Cowles				
Two Little Dutch Snow Men.....	None	Children		
By Gladys Henderson				
Three Christmas Stockings.....	None	3	3	0
By Yates and Allen				
Blue Moon.....	None	6	3	0
By Nellie B. Miller				
The Child Who Saw Santa Claus.....	None	2	4	0
By Bob White				

**ROW, PETERSON & COMPANY,**  
1911 Ridge Avenue, Evanston, Illinois

Hyacinths for Christmas.....	\$ 5.00	4	6	0
By Louise Helliwell				
The Nine Who Were Mother.....	5.00	5	5	0
By George Savage and Edouard Peltret				
The Lonely Hearth.....	5.00	0	3	0
By George Savage and Edouard Peltret				
In the Light of the Star.....	5.00	5	1	0
By Agnes Emelie Peterson				
Christmas Trimmings.....	None	5	5	0
By Marguerite Keger Phillips				
Faith and Works.....	None	3	2	0
By Sarah C. Pettit				
A Bed of Hay.....	None	3	1	Ex.
By Agnes Emelie Peterson				

**THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING CO.**  
59 E. Van Buren St., Chicago, Ill.

Children of the Inn.....	None	8	0	Ex.
By Jewell Bothwell Tull				
The Christmas Party.....	None	2	6	0
By Jean Lee Latham				
Come, Let Us Adore Him.....	\$10-(5.00)* 12	5	1	
By Victor Starbuck				
"Let Every Heart—"	5-(2.50)* 0	5	0	
By Mary Katharine Reely				
More Blessed.....	None	2	3	0
By Paul Moffett				
A Painting for the Duchess.....	None	5	5	6
By Marion Holbrook				
A Sign Unto You.....	None	2	3	1
By Jean Lee Latham				
The Supreme Gift.....	5-(2.50)* 3	2	2	
By Eugenia Whyte				
Christopher's Candle.....	None	2	5	1
By Anne Coulter Martens				
Santa Claus and the Madonna.....	None	6	6	4 boys
By H. E. Mansfield				
Dad.....	None	9	0	0
By Paul Moffett				
The Last Christmas.....	None	0	8	0
By Paul Moffett				

**LONGMANS, GREEN & COMPANY,**  
114 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

Lost Children.....	\$10-(5.00)* 3	7	0	
By Dorothy Nichols				
The Table Set for Himself.....	10-(5.00)* 4	5	0	
By Elene Wilbur				
A Child is Born.....	10-(5.00)* 15	4	0	
By Dorothy Nichols				
Sounding Brass.....	10-(5.00)* 8	10	0	
By Dorothy Nichols				
Dust of the Road.....	10-(5.00)* 3	1	0	
By Kenneth Sawyer Goodman				
The Doctor of Lonesome.....	10-(5.00)* 7	7	0	
Folk.....				
By Louise Armstrong				
Dolls.....	10-(5.00)* 3	8	0	
The Persian Poppy.....	5-(2.50)* 0	1	0	
By Gilbert Emery				
The Light Upon the Way.....	5-(2.50)* 4	3	0	
By Mabel H. Johnson				
The Nativity.....	10.00	9	2	0
Anonymous				

Ex. = extras. C = children.  
\* If no admission is charged.

## Federal Theatre List

We regret that space has not permitted us to print below the excellent list of Christmas Plays now available from the Play Bureau of the Federal Theatre Project, 303 West 42nd Street, New York City. A copy of this list is available free of charge to every tax-supported high school. We suggest that you write the Play Bureau for your list at once.

**ELDRIDGE ENTERTAINMENT HOUSE,  
INC., Franklin, Ohio**

The Lost Star.....	None	mixed	cast
By Walter Butts			
Cornelia Makes Christmas.....	None	4	5 Ex.
By Josephine Phillips			
Just Another Day.....	None	2	4 0
By Isla P. Richardson			
The Chimes Ring In.....	None	2	4 Ex.
By Gail White			
The Christmas Shadow.....	None	3	4 0
By Edith Squires			
The Family Round-Up.....	None	large	cast
By Arthur LeRoy Kaser			
Grandma's Christmas Guest.....	None	4	5 0
By Ross Farquhar			
Wanted—A Quiet Old-Fashioned Christmas.....	None	3	3 Ex.
By Mrs. Ben B. Nelson			
The Christmas Glow.....	None	3	3 Ex.
By Evelyn Billings			
Gifts of Myrrh.....	None	mixed	cast
By Karin Sundelof-Asbrand			
The Shepherd Who Came Late.....	None	8	3 Ex.
By Dorothy L. Sumner			
The Guest At the Inn.....	None	0	5 0
By Marion Holbrook			

**WALTER H. BAKER COMPANY,**  
178 Tremont Street, Boston, Massachusetts

Reverie.....	\$10.00	4	3	1
By Percival Wilde				
Solitaire.....	None	3	2	0
By Leslie R. Carey				
The Red Dress.....	None	1	1	3 or 4
By Frances W. Gross				
Kings in Nomania.....	10.00	19		characters
By Percival Wilde				
The Toy Shop.....	10.00	3	1	8
By Percival Wilde				
Love Comes Knocking.....	None	5	5	0
By Dorothy C. Allan				
Adeste Fidelis.....	5.00	15	7	3
By Louise A. Garnett				
And Myrrh.....	None	6	5	1
By Dorothy Clarke Wilson				
The Christmas Dinner.....	None	4	4	0
By Agnes Curtis				
Christmas is For Children.....	None	2	3	0
By Dorothy C. Allen				
The Broken Crucifix.....	5.00	2	2	0
By Frances W. Gross				
The Christmas Carol.....	None	6	3	0
By Geo. M. Baker				

**THE NORTHWESTERN PRESS,**  
2200 Park Avenue, Minneapolis, Minnesota

A Christmas Awakening.....	None	4	3	0
By K. A. Cutler				
The Shepherd Who Stayed.....	None	4	2	0
By Stuart Hunter				
Uncle Santa Claus.....	None	3	3	0
By Mary MacDonald				
The Drum.....	None	3	1	0
By Frances D. Singler				
Spirit of Christmas Giving.....	None	17		characters
By C. L. Harris				
The Tree.....	None	4	4	0
By E. L. McMartin				
Only a Bright Gift.....	None	5	2	Ex.
By E. W. Billings				
The Culver's Christmas Eve.....	None	5	5	0
By Germaine Haney				

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Gansert Bldg., Rock Island, Illinois

His Miracle.....	\$ 5.00	4	1	0
By Eugenia White				
Salvation Preferred.....	3.00	3	3	0
By Polly Simpson MacManus				
Christmas Comes to Thunder Cove.....	2.50	3	5	0
By Elizabeth Hyer Neff				
The Man About the House.....	3.00	4	4	0
By Marian Stearns Curry				

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## Charleston Thespians Stage Several Plays

(Continued from page 27)

which the National Thespians sponsor. The junior class presented the comedy, *Your Uncle Dudley*; the Curtain and Mask Dramatic Club staged the play, *A Murder Has Been Arranged*; the school faculty gave *Broken Dishes*, and the seniors produced *It Never Rains*.

Six one-act plays were also staged during the year. These were: *Demitasse*, *Over Age*, *How the Great Guest Came*, *The Pot Boiler*, *Suicide* and *Where the Cross is Made*; the last-mentioned play was awarded first place in the state one-act play contest. *Suicide* and *Demitasse* were directed by students.

A dramatization of the poem, *How the Great Guest Came*, by Miss Miriam Thomas, a member of the senior class, was staged before the student body before dismissal for the Christmas holidays, and was the subject of favorable comments by the local press.

### SAMUEL FRENCH,

25 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y.

Why the Chimes Rang	\$ 5.00	3	1	Ex.
By Elizabeth McFadden				
Mimi Lights the Candle	None	1	8	0
By Edith Coulter				
The Long Christmas Dinner	10.00	5	7	0
By Thornton Wilder				
The Lighting of the Christmas Tree	5.00	5	2	0
By Josephine Palmer and Annie L. Thorp				
The Little Shepherd	5.00	9	3	0
By Florence Ryerson and Colin Clements				
Tidings of Joy	5.00	10	6	Ex.
By Elizabeth McFadden				
The Woolly Lamb of God	5.00	14	2	Ex.
By F. Fraser Bond				
The Boy on the Meadow	5.00	1	4	0
By Ethel Van der Veer				
How the Great Guest Came	5.00	6	2	0
By Lionel Adams				
Among Those Presents	None	0	7	0
By Peggy Fenway				
Burnt Offering	5.00	3	3	0
By Mary P. Hamlin				
Babouska	5.00	1	5	0
By Ethel Van der Veer				

### BANNER PLAY BUREAU, INC.,

111 Ellis Street, San Francisco, Calif.

Birthday of a King	None	15	mixed	0
By Constance Willis Camp				
Christmas Magic	None	0	6	0
By Agnes Beryl Curtis				
For Unto You Is Born	5.00	4	1	Ex.
By Charles Caldwell Dobie				
Godfather's Christmas	None	4	4	0
By Elene Wilbur				
It's a Gift	None	2	2	0
By Richard L. Melville				
Mr. Santa Claus	None	1	1	0
By Marshall Stedman				
Pine Trees Blossoming	None	0	0	10
By Frances Cavanaugh				
Three Who Met at Banbury Cross	5.00	5	1	Ex.
By Belle Ritchey				

### IVAN BLOOM HARDIN COMPANY,

3806 Cottage Grove Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa				
The Tinklebutton	None	0	0	18
By Kathryn Lace				
The Cornhusk Doll	None	3	2	0
By Mary Macdonald				
Christmas Always Lives	None	10	or 12	
By Edna Becker				
Bread and Hyacinths	\$ .50	Dramatic reading		
By Karle Wilson Baker				
Why the Chimes Rang	None	5	3	0
By Raymond Macdonald Alden				
David's Star of Bethlehem	.50	Dramatic reading		
By Christine Whiting				
The Seventh Christmas	.50	Dramatic reading		
By Conigsby Dawson				
Santa's Dilemma	.50	Dramatic reading		
By Grace Mae Dixon				

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Chains	None	9	5	0
By Ethelyn M. Parkinson				
A Point of the Star	None	9	4	5
By Gladys Cleone Carpenter				
Surprise Package	None	4	4	0
By Mabel Crouch				
Christmas Without Patsy	None	4	4	0
By Mabel Crouch				
Christmas Comes to Aunt Kate	None	3	4	0
By Mabel Crouch				
Knights of the Holy Treasure	None	6	4	0
By Agnes Isham Ricker				
Christmas Patches	None	4	4	0
By Mabel Crouch				
Christmas Bouquets	None	3	3	0
By Lucile Crites				
What is a King?	None	3	7	Ex.
By Helen Waite Munro				

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## What's New Among Books and Plays

EDITED BY H. T. LEEPER

Reviews appearing under this department aim to help our readers keep up with recent books and plays. In most instances, these reviews are prepared with the hope that they prove of practical value to our readers.

*General Principles of Play Direction.* By Gilmor Brown and Alice Garwood. Samuel French, New York. 1936. \$2.00.

To know the successful methods of play direction used by Gilmor Brown at the Pasadena Playhouse is undoubtedly an aspiration of every ambitious drama director in America. *General Principles of Play Direction* provides just this information, for in this book Gilmor Brown—with the help of Alice Garwood—presents a highly informative account of the processes he has employed to create so many stage successes on the West coast. Of particular value to teachers are the numerous practical suggestions and short-cuts which Gilmor Brown includes in his book for the benefit of the busy high school or college drama director.

Beginning with a chapter on the director's media, Gilmor Brown takes the reader through a series of interesting discussions pertaining to all the important phases of the art and technique of play directing. We have, for example, chapters on such matters as the director's use of the stage, stage movements, necessary business, imposed business, the stage picture, dialogue, the actor's reaction to dialogue, characterization, tempo, rhythm and style, and the director and the play. The appendices include competent discussions regarding play selection, casting and rehearsals. The chapter on stage movements is especially worth while. If you are looking for a book on the latest views on play direction, a book based upon years of experience, *General Principles of Play Direction* is the book you want.

*The Gypsy Trail*, a comedy in three acts by Robert Housum. Samuel French. 5 m., 4 w. Royalty, \$15.00.

*The Gypsy Trail* is exceptionally good for presentation by double casts. The plot is good and easy to grasp, the suspense is sustained to the very end, the roles are not hard to characterize except for the hero and the grandmother, and there is a small cast. The lines are not difficult to learn and the cues are easy to get. It is a play an audience enjoys and likes to see twice, as it is neither a long nor tiresome play, but one with plenty of action and humor. Students enjoy working on it because of its humor, romance, action, and characterization.—Mary Miller.

*Achilles Had a Heel and Tapestry In Gray*, two plays by Martin Flavin. Samuel French. Large casts. Royalty. In bound volume, \$2.

*Achilles Had a Heel* is a satirical drama using an allegorical background. It has to do with a negro elephant-keeper in a zoo and the jealous hatred borne him by the white keeper of the monkeys. The elephant, a symbol of conscience, turns against the keeper when he takes up with a girl of easy virtue and forces his transfer to keeper of the monkeys, animals symbolical of the lowest in human nature. In the end the keeper saves the elephant from execution and is reinstated as his keeper.

*Tapestry In Gray* is a study of human motives and conduct. The story is set forth not as it actually occurred, but as its most vivid moments are remembered when recalled by a psychoanalyst. Important incidents in the relationships to each other of three people over a period of years are recalled and reenacted until a solution to their problem of entanglements is found. Divided into many scenes, as the above plan would require (they total 46), an interesting problem in staging is presented. Both plays are for advanced groups only.

*His Miracle*, a play in one-act by Eugenia White. Frederick B. Ingram Publications, Rock Island, Ill. 4 m., 1 w. Royalty, \$5.00.

*His Miracle* is a new Christmas play with a theme which should touch any audience. Harold has a profound admiration for Mrs. Chadwick who took him out of a boys' reform school and made him a member of her own home. But he feels that Mr. Chadwick does not believe in his efforts to make good. On the day before Christmas, Harold takes enough money from the cash register to buy Mrs. Chadwick a beautiful vase which she has wanted for a long time. Mr. Chadwick discovers the money has been taken and proceeds to have Harold arrested. Harold is found in the church where he had confessed to Dan whom he had mistaken for God. The boy's honest motives are discovered, and Mr. Chadwick asks for Harold's forgiveness. The play is easily staged, and can be easily performed by high school groups.

*The Haunted Chair*, a mystery-farce in three acts by James F. Stone. The Northwestern Press. 6 m., 6 w. Royalty, \$10.00.

*The Haunted Chair* is another of those mystery-farce plays which furnish lively entertainment, thrills and startling surprises. John Baxter is apparently dead, and in accordance with the terms of his will, his relatives come scurrying to the mansion to hear the reading of this strange document. When they discover, however, that John Baxter is probably the victim of murder they begin to feel uneasy for suspicion points directly to them. The appearance of Gilhooley, bungling detective, only complicates matters. During the course of the story, Gilhooley and Peggy, a visitor, and Baxter's body disappear. Thrills and surprises follow each other in rapid order until Nellie Kennedy, a lady private detective, calmly brings the story to a happy ending. The mystery is solved, and the relatives are all taken care of by the generous John Baxter, who was not dead after all.

This play is extremely easy to stage, as only one set of scenery is required. The mystery effects can be produced with little effort. Liza Lee and Lazy Lee, colored characters, provide comedy for the whole family. The parts are well balanced and suitable for the average high school actors.

*Life Begins at Sixteen*, a comedy in three acts by Hilda Manning. Samuel French. 6 m., 9 w. Royalty, \$10.00.

While Mr. and Mrs. Hollis are away on a trip, their sixteen-year-old son utilizes their absence to exercise his temporary rights as "head of the family". First, he decides to modernize the Hollis Shoe Store, and puts on a sale, with an orchestra, live models, handbills and all the trimmings. He has a hunch that Crandal, his nineteen-year-old sister's suitor, is really a racketeer, and sets out to prove it. To aid him he has the "Secret Seven", a society of sixteen-year-olds of which he is the president. The youngsters' efforts appear to have led into complete disaster for all concerned when Crandal's real character is recognized and everything turns out successfully.

This is easy to produce and a good play for high school students because the characters to be portrayed are almost all young people of the age of those who would be portraying the parts. Only two of the characters are adults and most of the rest are sixteen. High school youngsters will easily recognize themselves and their friends in these characters.

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## BEST YEARS

by RAYMOND VAN SICKLE

Comedy and drama are judiciously mixed in this story of a girl who gave up the best years of her life to the care of her invalid mother. The characters present excellent parts for high school actors, sharply etched, well balanced. The cast is composed of five men, five women; only one set is required. Director's Manuscript lent free to producers. Books, 75c each. The royalty is only \$10—and it's a Broadway play.

## THE GIRL FROM CHILDS

by ARCHIE COLBY

Like Maud Fulton's famous play, "The Brat," this is the story of a waif who has struggled with poverty from childhood, thrown suddenly into the midst of a family of social importance and wealth, and of her fight for happiness. The cast is for four men and six women; the royalty is only \$10. Books are 75c. Director's Manuscript.

The Play Department

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*Three Days of Grace*, a farce comedy in three acts by Felicia Metcalfe. Row, Peterson & Co., 10 m., 8 w. Percentage royalty.

In spite of the title, the play really centers about Janet, a girl whose possibilities are kept hidden beneath supposed invalidism by her miserly elder sister Kate. Philippa, a cousin, and Gracie, her scatterbrain roommate, arrive to spend a few days. With Kate sent to the country on a wild-goose chase, the two visitors proceed to put to work their modern ideas, beginning with a houseparty. They make over Janet and the household in general, but Janet proves such an apt pupil that she beats them at their own game and walks off with the town's most eligible bachelor, Dr. Cashion.

All the characters but Kate are youthful and easy for high school students. Three of the men may be doubled. The action takes place in one setting, an easy interior.

*Red Hot Peppers*, a farce in three acts by Reby Edmond. Eldridge. 5 m., 5 w. Royalty, \$10.00.

A delightfully irresponsible and impulsive family of five young people are the Peppers. Since rumor has it that Joan, one of the five, is about to marry Evelyn, a French Duc, the others decide to break up the affair by posing as descendants of the Kallikak family of feeble-minded notoriety. Their efforts to act crazy at a tea-party fail to properly impress the Duc, who turns out to be a regular fellow. Worse yet, Mary, another one of the five, falls for the Duc and he for her. The remaining three brothers and sister think the idea splendid, but are stumped at the problem of eliminating Joan. They presently find Joan has already solved the problem by eloping with a young missionary.

Frankly nonsensical and cock-eyed in mood, and with a slight and fluffy plot, this play will nevertheless require careful casting. Much of the play depends on the smartness of the lines, and with a cast that can successfully project this lightness across the footlights it should be hilariously funny.

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*The Swastika Over Germany* by Wiley Hayne. With highly forceful language this oration again reviews for us the rise of Germany under Hitler. The significance of the Nazi movement as a military machine determined to master the rest of the world is brought to a dramatic climax.

*The Treason of Benedict Arnold*. The value of this oration lies in the fact that we are told why Arnold betrayed his country—a total want of moral character in the man himself. Good for the student who wants to develop his art in the field of public speaking.

*The Big Front*, a comedy in three acts by Clark Willard. Eldridge Entertainment House. 5 m., 6 w. Royalty, \$10.00.

A personality specialist, a breezy newspaper man, a beautiful nurse, a collection agent, a social butterfly, and a serious young doctor are among the interesting characters which make *The Big Front* a hilarious, satirical comedy the average audience will thoroughly enjoy. Dr. Smith is a capable expert but lacks the so-called "big front" to make him a success in his practice. A personality specialist gives him some valuable lessons in speaking and meeting people. The doctor is also in love with a social butterfly, but as the story proceeds he loses interest in her. Meanwhile the real heroine of the story, Catherine Burns, finds a place in the doctor's heart. Mrs. Torgensen and Mrs. Morgan furnish refreshing comedy, while Mrs. Kingman earns the sneers she so thoroughly deserves. All in all, *The Big Front* tells a clean, lively story of everyday life destined to make a hit with many audiences.

*The Big Front* is an excellent choice for a high school play. It is easy to stage, the parts are varied, the story is good, and the dialogue is convincing. At a royalty of \$10.00, this is a real bargain in first rate entertainment.

*Old Love Letters*, a play in one act by Bronson Howard. Samuel French. 1 m., 2 w. Royalty, \$5.00.

A delightful example of the plays of the latter part of the nineteenth century, this play contains all the characteristic techniques of the theatre of that period, the soliloquies, the Victorian sentiment, flowery dialogue, and music to accompany its sadder moments. The story, in brief, is as follows: A successful diplomat returns to call upon a young widow with whom he had an early romance, ostensibly to return the letters she had written him years before and to claim those which he had written her. They read aloud certain bits from the letters, pretending to laugh at their earlier expressions of sentiment. Their laughter at each other's letters leads to a quarrel, but it is only a prelude to the resumption of the romance where it had been interrupted years before.

Adapted and arranged by Garret H. Leverton, director of the Northwestern University Theatre, the play has with it the complete business and directions for a setting made in the spirit of the late nineteenth century theatre. A short and easy play to produce, it offers an "ideal opportunity to recapture the flavor and charm of the theatre of our grandparents."

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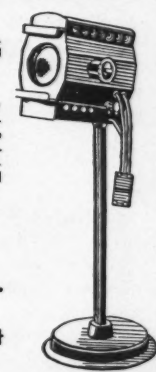
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# Our Periodicals in Review

REVIEWED BY LOTTA JUNE MILLER

Articles reviewed in this department are selected for their practical value to drama teachers and students. These reviews will have achieved their purpose if they instill a desire among our readers to maintain an active acquaintance with the periodicals.

## The Actor Attacks His Part

I. Helen Hayes

By MORTON EUSTIS

Theater Arts Monthly for October, 1936

Helen Hayes' method of developing a role inaugurates a series of articles on acting which should be invaluable to the amateur actor and director. The chief deficiency in our amateur productions is the lack of clear vision on the part of the actor of the role to be portrayed.

Miss Hayes first conceives of her character as a person apart from herself. She spends days, even weeks, visualizing this person in all her aspects until a complete, vivid image is engraved in her mind. It is at this point of development that she employs her technique to project herself, as a living being, into this foreign personality.

This alone is not enough. That indefinable quality which she calls creative power must step in to lift the interpretation above the ordinary. Without this inner fire, technique is but a lattice with no vine. But creative power alone, without technique, is a vine confined to the ground.

This article is of such intrinsic value that it could well be studied, in detail, by every Thespian Troupe.

## II. Lynn Fontanne; III. Alfred Lunt

By MORTON EUSTIS

Theater Arts Monthly for November, 1936

A rare combination of actor, director, designer, and producer are Lynn Fontanne and Alfred Lunt. Little do they worry about literary interpretation or analysis of character. They visualize their shows as a whole and leave the dissecting process until later when it occurs slowly and painlessly in the sanctuary of their home where they flamboyantly improvise each scene. Although they have played almost constantly together since 1924, their technique, as they are loathed to call it, varies widely.

Miss Fontanne (by the way, all married women are addressed as "Miss" in the theater), involves more technique than she is perhaps conscious. She stresses voice control by stating that a good actor must "know how to pitch and throw his voice so as to fill a theater." Timing, another important element, is one of those things that simply must be inherited not developed. She says it is better "to be a little off beat, to jangle!" rather than to be studied.

Alfred Lunt, with true vaudevillian tactics, slashes all our illusions about technique to the winds, claiming that there should be no rules about anything. Just act! He further shatters our ideals by saying, "The actor is not a creative, but an interpretive artist. His one and only job is to work within the play, to translate the ideas of the author. The play itself is what counts." He claims never to play himself but always to piece together the character from real life within the forms stipulated by the playwright. At all times the actor must be conscious of what is going on about him so that he will know how to play his audience. "You must know what you are doing every second you are on the stage."

The most delightful aspect of his acting is the sheer enjoyment he derives. He acts "because it's fun—more fun than anything else I know."

## Living—Though Legend

By ROBERT TURNEY

The Stage for October, 1936

The personification of forces which combined to create *The Daughters of Atreus* in the mind of Robert Turney were no less dramatic than the old Greek myth itself. Here in this article, episode by episode is told the story of the creation of this remarkable play and its acceptance first by Dame Sybil Thorndyke, then by George Jean Nathan, and finally by Broadway producers.

Success is practically guaranteed to this young playwright of Columbia University for the part of Polymnia, the old nurse, is being played by Maria Ouspenskaya, who has long been a major actress in Europe and America. The revival of this old theme only goes to show that there is something new about everything old. (Word has just reached us that this play has suddenly closed.)

## Promised Crammed

By SIDNEY PORTER

The Stage for October, 1936

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

So comes the accusing finger pointing out to us the fallacies of our modern drama in contrast to that of the great Shakespeare. It is a rehearsal of *Hamlet* in the smoking room of the Martin Beck Theater where the famed English actor, John Gielgud, and his distinguished cast are assembled. Here Guthrie McClintic, Katharine Cornell's famous husband, is directing a cast composed of Judith Anderson, Lillian Gish, Arthur Bryon, Malcolm Keen, John Emery, Harry Andrews, George Nash, and Morgan Farley.

Be not alarmed if your heart rises into your mouth at the prospect of such a production. It makes the old English class version of "To be, or not to be" fairly palpitate as a living experience rather than survive as a stale Easter egg in the basket of unpleasant memories.

## The Quicksands of the Movies

By GILBERT SELDES

The Atlantic Monthly for October, 1936

Having spent several months in neurotic Hollywood inspecting America's most glamorous industry, that of the motion pictures, Gilbert Seldes, an eminent critic, emerges with a startling account of the problems of the celluloid world. It seems that our multi-million dollar entertainment factory is not making the profits it should because of its lack of insight into the average mind. It isn't art that people crave so much as the reproduction of the richness of life through the actions of human characters. George Bernard Shaw once said to Samuel Goldwyn, "You are a business man and interested only in art; I am an artist, and interested only in money."

We often point with pride and envy to Colonel Lindbergh as a man whose life has been filled with drama, but, even taking into account his sensational flight to Paris, his existence has not been as hectic as that of our motion picture exponents. Ever since its genesis, its life has been a series of shocks and uncertainties. With the advent of the radio, the business took on symptoms of a nervous breakdown, but, when sound pictures came in, the neural system practically collapsed.

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An amusing slant at unsophisticated youth as it flutters uncertainly on the wings of sixteen.

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